

SEVEN DAYS

Winter Reading Issue



TWEET FEATS

PAGE 32

'Character' studies by VT authors



SHELF SELECTION

PAGE 35

Browsing indie bookstores



FAT FICTION

PAGE 48

Bill Schubart's weighty words

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The deadline for application is the Friday of the Open Enrollment Period (February 1st, 2012) (open until 5:00 PM). Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. Applications are available at the public school offices at each school choice and online at www.sbschools.net.

For details on academic and extracurricular opportunities, curriculum, school policies, etc., please contact the district that you are considering. Also, SBSchools.com has a page explaining the choice between the two schools.

In addition to this program, South Burlington High School may also coordinate with other school districts to be located high school (e.g., Seneca, South Lake County, St. George, etc.). In some cases, SBSchools.com may provide information on other school districts. Please contact the public school offices for more information.

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Feedback

READER REACTION TO RECENT ARTICLES

SMALL PLATES, BIG BILL

Lately I've noticed that the restaurant reviews have been a bit more critical, while still serving to be supportive of the local food scene. This is good, keep it up! Your review of Via Loma paralleled my experience. "Small Plates." December 15? mean place that I went to like, but exceedingly ugly to the point of discomfort. The food was decent, nothing special, but had potential. I was thinking of going back until my \$52 bill came, and I was still quite hungry.

This is not just Via Loma. Church & Main, The Green Room, Bluebird et al are becoming more so small plates. The reality is that the effort, labor, overhead and cost it takes to create a small plate is, except for actual ingredients, about the same as a large plate. Therefore, the cost is too high and the perceived value too low.

My friends and I have been regularly chastised by the possibility of enjoying a microplate of small tastes and then shocked at the cost.

Michael Winkowski
WHEELING

SI, VIA LOMA

In response to the hypercritical review of Via Loma ["Small Plates," December 15], I would comment that my experiences there have been excellent, including

good service and excellent food. Also, I have bearing impairment but feel the acoustics at Via Loma quite good. I would not hesitate to return.

Michael Wool
ENFLETT

AIR APPARENT

An avianator programmer at low-power 158-watt WMKX 95.1 FM in Warren and also at 1000 watt WGDR 91.1 FM out of Gaddard College in Plainfield, I enjoyed reading about Harry and Jack's radio show at WHDM ["Kid FM," December 8]. The novelty of independent, contemporary-based, free-form radio is taking off around Vermont and elsewhere, much to the satisfaction of the 35-year-old Gaddard station employees.

A couple of things caught my attention. First: Did you get "heterotopias" out of a Graduate Round Room review contest? Two conventional dictionaries did not contain it. I finally located this vaguely familiar term (because I took the GRE) on an online site. It means "usually and arbitrarily defined" or "apparently basic" which Harry (who can't possibly have encountered this term yet) clearly isn't, in your portrayal of him. Perhaps that's a "Saves Ryme" for trying to appear hip and erudite? I'm 38, and the main reason I'm on the air for no pay are because

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MONDAY 27 &
TUESDAY 28

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SEE CALNDAR LISTINGS ON PAGES 16 & 17



TUESDAY 28

Warm Welcome

Here meets a frost-free warm you can fall into the warm, dark, cozy of *Mary on the Beach* (a classic of the 1940s). The Burlington song lyrics change for way through the winter country folk songs such as "Love Thru" and "The Year".

SEE CLAR DATE ON PAGE 14

3

WEDNESDAY 22-FRIDAY 24
SUNDAY 26 WEDNESDAY 29

Sleigh Anything

'Tis the season to enjoy through snowfall... and the fun of riding on a sleigh. *Shrek the Musical* (a classic of the 1940s). The Burlington song lyrics change for way through the winter country folk songs such as "Love Thru" and "The Year".

SEE CALNDAR SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 10

2

WEDNESDAY 22 &
THURSDAY 23

On a Roll

This week an extraordinary Christmas Eve story, just the name. *How Jan Kennedy* (a classic of the 1940s). The Burlington song lyrics change for way through the winter country folk songs such as "Love Thru" and "The Year".

SEE CALNDAR LISTING ON PAGE 11

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WEDNESDAY 29

Radioheads

Do you remember it? *How Jan Kennedy* (a classic of the 1940s). The Burlington song lyrics change for way through the winter country folk songs such as "Love Thru" and "The Year".

SEE CALNDAR SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 11

5

SATURDAY 25

Happy Merry

You don't have to literally be a name for the holidays. In a couple of public events featuring community groups. *Shrek the Musical* (a classic of the 1940s). The Burlington song lyrics change for way through the winter country folk songs such as "Love Thru" and "The Year".

SEE CALNDAR LISTING ON PAGE 12

6

ONGOING

Land of Many

This time of year, it's a matter of a pretty little, it's a good way to display more, and to know, the best of the best. *Shrek the Musical* (a classic of the 1940s). The Burlington song lyrics change for way through the winter country folk songs such as "Love Thru" and "The Year".

SEE ART REVIEW ON PAGE 10

7

everything else...

CALNDAR	0:00
CLASSES	0:00
MUSIC	0:00
ART	0:00
MOVIES	0:00





Keeping State Secrets

You've probably heard of Wikileaks and its founder, **JULIAN ASSANGE**. Maybe even **BRADLEY MANNING**, the Army private and former intelligence officer who allegedly turned over thousands of classified documents to Wikileaks.

But chances are you don't know the name **THOMAS DRAKE**, a former Vermont resident charged under the Espionage Act for releasing classified information. His alleged crime? Drake blew the whistle on a wasteful surveillance program within the National Security Agency.

Drake grew up in southern Vermont, attended a one-room schoolhouse and later went to Burr and Burton Academy, where his father taught, in the early 1970s. His mother was the personal secretary for writer **JOHN F. BURN** when the author lived in Dushy.

Drake, who now works at an Apple store in northern Virginia, had "top secret" clearance when he worked at the NSA, according to court records. He began work there as a contractor in 1994, after 33 years in the U.S. Air Force. Drake became a full-time NSA employee in August 2000. His first day on the job was September 13, 2001.

Drake was assigned to a secret surveillance detail that collected and reviewed millions of pieces of data — some of them personal — in search of suspected domestic terrorist activity.

Over time, Drake came to believe the program was a "budget sponge" used to pad the agency's expenditures. He also believed some of the personal data collected likely violated protections against illegal search and seizure, court records existed.

"In short, he believed that NSA was spending exponentially more for a system that functioned the 'War on Terrorism,' but passed a secret war on America's constitution with flying colors," reads "Whistleblower Which Drake," a report issued last month by the Government Accountability Project (GAP), a group devoted to defending whistleblowers.

There were more secrets, and less costly, options, Drake told his superiors. They ignored him. So, in early 2006 he took his story to a reporter at the *Bellows Falls News-Herald* and published stories about the surveillance program over the course of 18 months.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was not pleased. Determined to find the

source of the *Star's* stories, agents raided Drake's home in late 2007. He cooperated with federal investigators until April 2008, when Drake realized that he was a target of the probe and not just a witness. He then resigned from the NSA.

Only four people in U.S. history have been charged under the Espionage Act for releasing classified information. The first was **DANIEL ELIZABETH**, who leaked "The Pentagon Papers" to the *New York Times*. The documents revealed the United States' military strategy in Vietnam and helped turn the public against the war, triggering events that led to the resignation of President

NICHOLAS A. HENRI

CLEARLY THEY ARE TRYING TO SEND A CHILLING MESSAGE, BUT IT'S ON THE BACK OF THE WRONG GUY.

CHRIS FRAPPIER, FRIEND OF VERMONT CHARGED UNDER THE ESPIONAGE ACT

Ellsberg's prosecution was overturned due to government misconduct. Drake may not be so lucky. If convicted, he could face up to 35 years in jail.

"Too often, whistleblowers end up choosing their conscience over their career, but in Mr. Drake's case, speaking truth to power may cost him his very liberty," said **JACQUELIN RADACK**, GAP's homeland security director. Drake's prosecution has also had a "chilling effect on national security and intelligence community whistleblowers," she said, "arguably the category of people you would most want to hear from if the government is withholding people or secretly surveilling its own citizens."

Radack is hoping Congress will use the Drake case to push for stronger whistleblower protections.

"From what I can tell, he didn't do this for himself or any grand cause," said **CHRIS FRAPPIER**, who attended Burr and Burton with Drake and is now an attorney at the public defender's office in Burlington. "That's very much like Tim. He always had a strong sense of wrong and right and of honor. Maybe he did the right thing, maybe he didn't, but the consequences are horrific, they are disproportionately horrific."

"I fear the storm ahead for him," said Frappier. "Clearly, they are trying to send a chilling message, but it's on the back of the wrong guy."

Battle for Recognition

At least three at Vermont's Native American tribes will seek state recognition from the legislature next year in hopes of boosting their chances of receiving a federal designation to sell handmade goods as "official" Native American wares. The official stamp would also allow Vermont's American Indians to access federal education funds.

A bill designed to grant recognition to select tribes was introduced last year due to ongoing tensions between Abenaki and non-Abenaki, as well as disputes within the Abenaki community itself. Lawmakers took sides, too, in these generations-old battles.

Rather than grant recognition, lawmakers established new hoops, or criteria a tribe must meet to be legit in the eyes of the legislature. It also called for all new appointments to the nine-member Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs.

The VCNAA, along with several outside scholars, has the task of reviewing each recognition request. If VCNAA gives the OK, requests are forwarded to the House General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee for review. Whatever it recommends goes to a full-house vote.

So far, three tribes have applied: Nulagagan, Nulagagan and Elna. Their applications are under review and they will be ready for a legislative vote this coming session, and VCNAA's new chairman, **LUKE WALLACE**, the former chief of the Nulagagan Tribe in the Northeast Kingdom. Others tribes are still preparing applications, but these might not be ready in time for a vote in 2011.

Some Abenaki allies have taken the unusual step of asking House Speaker **WILLIAMS** to sign one lawmaker in particular — Rep. **KEVIN RAY** (D-Burlington) — from the senate process. Why? The perception is that Ray played a key role in drafting last year's recognition effort at the US House.

Ram tells "Fair Game" she has no intention of stepping down from the House General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee.

"I am kept by the news of this letter, however, the Abenaki community is not

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monolithic," said Ram. "Focusing on the role of one legislator negates the thoughtful and complete engagement of our entire legislative body in passing laws that best serve our state."

A former VCNAA member believes the "new process" is studied in favor of the Abenaki and the various tribes thought to be aligned with them.

"The current commission does not represent a broad spectrum of native peoples in the state of Vermont," notes former VCNAA commissioner **BRAD BARNETT**. "It was not supposed to be slanted toward the 'Abenaki' tribes, and now it is."

Willard hopes to smooth out past problems by proving the commission can work with all tribes and break free of past agendas.

"The act interested in getting involved in a long, drawn out process," said Willard. "This revenue process was set up to avoid that."

Travel Tally

Vermont taxpayers shelled out close to \$1.7 million in out-of-state travel expenses for state residents and executives between mid-January and mid-November 2000. That's an increase of about \$300,000 over the same time period last year.

All aboard the gravy train? Sure seems like it.

According to a report provided to "Fair Game" by the Agency of Administration, state employees were reimbursed roughly \$790,000 for out-of-state travel, including car rentals, airfare, hotels and meals, over the 11-month period. Another \$490,000 as out-of-state travel costs was charged to state-owned credit cards.

The top four jet-setting agencies or departments were the Department of Public Safety — \$295,854, the Agency of Transportation — \$166,200, the Department of Health — \$123,000, the Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities and Health Care Administration — \$90,000. BISHOP spent another \$59,000 on travel but had those costs reimbursed by outside associations and organizations. Charging BISHOP a commissioner **MADE OUTRAGED** and he'd been ruled by Finance Commissioner **AL BLANCHARD** to be "very aggressive about finding ways to turn those costs covered by outside agencies, and we're done here."

The Department of Public Services plunked down more than \$45,000 this year on out-of-state travel — double what it spent last year.

Roulette and two critical mistakes kept DPH officials flying around the

country. **Parson's** bankruptcy loanings and the state slow-leave radioactive waste compact with Texas.

Fifth Floor Feminist?

On Monday, **Albenis** assistant Deputy Treasurer **NEEN FRANKS** to succeed Treasurer **AL FRANKS**. Spending will resign from office in January to become **Montpelier** secretary of administration. Come January, **Parson** will be the only woman holding statewide elective office.

In Gov. **ELIZABETH** trying to compensate for that gender inequality by appointing so many women to key leadership posts? To date, half of his 38 appointees have been women — far a lot of state staffers in the upper levels of state government.

Montpelier's key inner circle of staff are on the fifth floor — where the executive office is located in the Pavilion Building in Montpelier — has only two Y-chromosomes configured. staffers the governor elect and his chief of staff **BRADLEY**.

I guess we know who's got the nose date in this administration.

Medin Notes

Former radio hosts **STEVE CORNELL**, **TOM BRIDGEMAN** and **LARA WILDER** launched a new two hour morning show, "Corn, Coach & Lane" on Northeast Sports Network (NENSports.net) at 7 a.m. Monday the trio was guffawing over headlines, talking with guests and joking around like so time had passed.

In fact, it's been a while. The long running "Corn & the Coach" went silent in 2000 when the owners of 101.3 Chorus FM canceled the show. The program resurfaced in November 2001 on WMMR 97.1 FM, only to disappear after several later when the station ran into financial trouble.

Wilder was laid off from 92.9 FM earlier this year.

Starting January 3, the trio's 7 a.m. show will be simulcast on WEAKE, WEAKE-FM's secondary digital channel 22.

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Biomass Busted? Why Wood-Fired Power Is Catching Heat in Vermont

BY ANDY BROMAGE

Is biomass the solution to Vermont's energy problems or the next big threat to our health and environment? Virtually every candidate in the next governor's race — including Rep. Brian Dubois — championed the idea of burning wood for heat and electricity as a clean and renewable alternative to fossil fuels. Plus, biomass can provide crucial base-load electric power — something neither intermittent wind nor solar power can do.

In November, the legislature created Biomass Energy Development Working Group issued a draft report endorsing construction of one large-scale power plant and calling for state-level subsidies to encourage growth of Vermont's biomass industry.

But now that two wood-fired power plants have been proposed — in Putney and Pownal — opponents are raising war of the woodwork, contending it's not that clean, and could threaten forests and human health. Leading the charge is Josh Schlusberg, a self-described "advocacy journalist" who writes a newsletter called "Biomass Bastards." The East Montpelier resident works for the Biomass Accountability Project, a Massachusetts-based group that formed to oppose biomass power plants in the Bay State.

ENERGY

"It's sort of carbon technology," Schlusberg says of biomass electricity — a point he makes in an anti-biomass editorial he's presenting in towns all over the state, including Pownal and Putney.

It's cleaner than the dirtiest, but when you compare it to emissions from wind, solar and small hydro, it's not even in competition.

Biomass plants work the same way as coal-fired ones do — only they burn plant material, such as wood or switchgrass, to make steam, which turns a turbine that generates electricity. Depending how it's combined and what pollution controls a plant has, biomass can produce lower net carbon emissions than coal and is infinitely more renewable. Either is essentially a crop that can be planted over and over again.

At Beaver Wood Energy LLC, that looks like a good business model. The Midway, Mass.-based company, a group of energy executives from New England who are partnering with engineering giant Bechtel, is proposing to build both Vermont plants. It promises that each generating station will produce 28 megawatts of local power, create 86 full-time jobs, and stimulate Vermont's construction and forestry economies.

How's the company's track record? The Beaver Wood partners have been involved in multiple business ventures, including

GoPower Services LLC and Alternative Energy Inc. They used to operate biomass plants in Maine, and racked up a string of at-aquady violations and corresponding fines there — including one for \$18,000 it's all documented on the website of a group opposed to the Pownal proposal.

Thomas Emery, a founding partner of Beaver Wood Energy, downplays the infractions. He says Maine state regulators kept track of every occasion when the plant exceeded pollution limits — once when they were exceeded — but didn't come forth with the info until the company was looking to sell.

"It's no different than a police officer watching you go by his speed limit at 67 miles an hour: Is he going to pull you over? Probably not," Emery says. "But if there was a computer-generated record of that, and the state decides they're going to go back and issue fines for every single time you've ever exceeded 66 miles an hour, you're going to get a bill."

The biomass plants in Vermont would be state-of-the-art, says Emery, noting the trouble in Maine stemmed in part from burning construction debris laden with paint and other toxic chemicals. They'd be far cleaner than most combined



Beaver Wood Energy Station

Art or Exploitation? Local Artist Solicits Stories From Rape Survivors for Video Project

BY KEN PICARD

At first glance, the online ad sounds like a promising, albeit emotionally charged, opportunity for a self-selected candidate. Anonymous rape survivors invited to inclusion in a theatrical production. You do not need to do any acting or much beyond meeting with the producer for a couple of hours. The project benefits the Burlington Rape Crisis Center.

This ad, and at least three others that are similarly worded, are currently running on the Burlington hub of Craigslist, a national online bulletin board that publishes postings for jobs, housing, services, items for sale and other "yaps."

The ads were placed over the last four months by Burlington artist and musician Dana Graham Phelps, who claims to be compiling rape-survivor stories for

vermont.craigslist.org > jobs > all eastern jobs

Rape Survivors (Burlington)

Date: 2010-11-09, 12:06PM EST

Reply to: job-q2hcr-2010-078235@craigslist.org www.whatsonline.com

inclusion in a "multimedia video project," he's producing at WGAM, a local community-access channel. Phelps says his ultimate goal is to raise money for victim-advocacy groups in Vermont and elsewhere.

One problem: The Women's Rape Crisis Center has no connection to Phelps or his work, and has posted a warning to that

effect on its website. Of particular concern to the WRCC are reports that Phelps has asked some of the female respondents if they would describe to be could photograph them naked. Several have reportedly done so.

"The WRCC has never, and will never, endorse or partner with any projects that sexualize and/or glorify the reality of

rape," the online statement reads. "Any attempt on the part of an independent organization or individual to expressly represent or imply such an association or partnership with the WRCC exists should not be believed."

WRCC director Gabrielle Wilson first learned about the ads from a woman who responded to one of them. The woman told Wilson she was "compelled out" after meeting with Phelps at his apartment. Wilson declined to comment further about Phelps or his work.

The ads have since attracted the attention of the Burlington Police Department and the Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations, the latter of which investigates potential sex and Internet crimes. Both agencies warn the

heat-and-electric biomass systems not to mention conventional wood stoves, because he installs "millions of dollars' worth of filters to cut emissions."

The Vermont government would be slightly more efficient too. Like coal- and gas-fired plants, most biomass plants struggle to consistently use 25 percent of the fuel into electricity, the rest is lost to waste heat. Combined heat and power plants, such as one at Middlebury College, are significantly more efficient. The Middlebury plant yields around 800 kilowatts of electricity and heats the entire campus, according to Chris Raczka, executive director of the Maplewood-based Thomas Energy Resource Center (RESC).

NOW THAT TWO WOOD-FIRED POWER PLANTS HAVE BEEN PROPOSED — IN FAIR HAVEN AND POWNALL — BIOMASS OPPONENTS ARE COMING OUT OF THE WOODWORK.

Efficiency at the Pownall and Fair Haven plants would be more than 30 percent, RESC says — because the waste heat would be put to use in accompanying wood-pellet manufacturing operations at both locations. There would still be enough heat left over to heat a town the size of Bennington, Raczka says, but neither plant is located close enough to a population center to make that happen.

It's a similar situation at Vermont's biggest biomass plant, the 30-megawatt Milliken Generating Station in Burlington's Intervale. The plant could heat most of downtown, Raczka says, but the infrastructure isn't there, so it is at Middlebury.

"There's a fundamental disconnect about where we choose to use those things and the size and scale of them relative to trying to make efficient use of the resource," says Raczka, who sits on the legislature's biomass committee.

"People don't seem to care whether you get just 25 percent of the energy value out of coal. They'll just mine more coal," he says. "It's the same of our resources, we care a lot about our forests."

Will biomass be good for Vermont's forests? That's one of the questions State Rep. Chris Bray (D-New Haven) is considering to co-chair of the Biomass Energy Development Working Group. Three decades ago, Bray worked for a year as a logger. He says he hears the same

question today that he did back then on the woods: Why doesn't Vermont use more of its wood for energy? So, in 2008, he sponsored a bill that convinced a group to look into expanding markets for biomass.

"Although we talk about agriculture being an industry and the forest, the forests are actually source for forestry and our wood-products industry," Bray says. The group goal is to build, make Vermont more energy independent; ensure the survival of the forestry industry; and make sure wood used for biomass is harvested sustainably.

The November draft report recommended permitting one large-scale, wood-fired electrical generating facility in southern Vermont, supporting school conversions to biomass energy, and offering a moratorium on new coal and large-scale natural gas to spare the biomass industry.

Chris Kay responded by saying Bray's group treats biomass enterprises as a foreigner enterprise. Ann Ingerson, a Vermont-based resource consultant for the Wilderness Society, says expanding biomass — for heating or electricity — has the potential to be an unintended "bust" on Vermont's environment. Now loggers cut wood solely for biomass, she notes, instead doing what is called "integrated" harvesting. They cut the best trees for lumber; what's left becomes pulp, or chips and pellets for biomass.

Removing mature-rich tree trunks from the forest has the potential to compromise soil quality and economic streams, Ingerson says. "But not opposed to biomass energy" she says. "But if we pass new policies with incentives and things happen really fast, we could find ourselves with unintended consequences."

Observers also question why the committee isn't probing the health and climate impacts of biomass and why there's no climate scientist, soil scientist or public health official on the panel.

Admitting his focus is "economic development," Bray says his committee has asked health and climate efforts to a lot of issues that "ought to be looked at" going forward.

Meanwhile, Newer Wood Energy hopes to get the green light from the Vermont Public Service Board by spring to qualify for \$100 million in federal subsidies that expire in 2012. But so far, lucrative subsidies for biomass power plants have failed to produce much new construction — at least in New England. Raczka says that RESC has tracked no fewer than 250 proposals for new biomass power plants over the last decade. Of those, only one has been built, a New Hampshire plant that was converted from coal to wood.

"When investors actually put pencil to paper, it all goes downhill," Raczka says. "It becomes less and less attractive to new entrants, less and less cost effective."

Time will tell whether Vermonters have the same reaction to biomass. ☐

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Feedback

BARBIE'S BUD

[Re: "Tobi Doy: Bud Get Barbie," December 8] I recall that, back in the '70s, Barbie had a friend called Growing Up Skipper. A twist of her arm made breasts suddenly shoot out like magic! My sympathy did a scolding article and wondered if it would solve a Growing Up Buster and what might arise at the twist of an arm. I can only guess.

Paul Falconer
MONTREAL

DEFENDING HUMPERDINK

There I was, lining the litter box with last week's Seven Days, when the name Humperdink Humperdink caught my eye in the review section... I read the photo caption: "If you don't know who Wu-Tang Clan are... run up on old Humperdink Humperdink record and wail on its your consummate homies!"

I'll skip the looping lecture about BPs prominent talent and mastery of musical diversity; your review is hilarious! too lame to recognize the usage of BPs names. Instead, I'll show insight at the narrow, blood, uniformly imposed on music today by the stars that have fooled people such as you writer. Fools don't think believing that aggressive posturing is a real, era/revolutionary step up from celebrating leaping, taste and love. Wake up! The strutting, swaggering, posing and gutturing are a mask for more than the absence of talent. They mask the corporate message. Dumb down, lower your expectations to a basic lowest common denominator. Walmart doesn't want us to grasp the vision of our most-memorial, brilliant potentials far creative art. That would be real revolution and make us dangerous opponents and loony consumers.

Bill Detjen
OURLINGTON

STOP THE F-35S

[Re: "Vietnam's Day the F-35 Coalition Reunites a Veteran Spokesman," October 18] The Joint Strike Fighters, or F-35s, are weapons systems built for aggressive maneuver, not defense. Some readers have recently proved the specter of 9/11, claiming the J5Fs will keep us secure from "terrorism." I see at least two problems there: We are the ones should bombing, maiming and killing civilians, and US defense armpower did not prevent 9/11, but was oddly inept at our terrible day.

The carbon footprint of our asset also be addressed in order for us to turn the corner on planetary preservation and survival. The strategy resources would to manufacture the J5F and the constant

burning of fuel are just two contributors. I would have to walk or bike to work for the rest of my life to save the amount of fuel that a J5F uses in an hour, we don't have that kind of time.

The J5F's bloodthirsty, and absolute before manufacture. NOWAR officials projected life-cycle maintenance costs of the J5F fleet at over \$1 trillion. That doesn't include the billions in overseas that have already occurred during development and testing.

Thousands of Vietnamese died war morally reprehensible, and I believe we should be able to opt out of having our tax money squandered on professional, government-sanctioned murder. Our congressional delegation should introduce a bill to ensure this right. I would like to see my taxes spent on small-scale solar energy, housing, education and health care instead. This would provide true security for my family, neighborhood, Vietnam community and planet.

Laraine Larson
BIRMINGHAM

MIL GRACIAS

Vernant Institute on the Caribbean and English Topics. Fresh from Santiago de Cuba would like to extend a sincere thank you to the almost 200 community members who attended our fundraising Cuban Dance Party! ["Magnifico!" December 8] Mai were a great crowd, welcoming our Cuban friends



with Vernant warmth, hospitality and impressive dancing! Your support helps VIC continue our commitment to developing collaborative partnerships and exchange between Vernant and the people of Cuba — an unmet, solidarity into another Mil gracias!

Mariela Kozminsk
BIRMINGHAM

Kozminsk is executive director of the Vernant Institute on the Caribbean.

BAD ENERGY

Trust no bad that cartoonist Andy Singer ["No Ret," December 1] does not have the imagination to think up enough scary ideas in Making Fun of chairs believing, just for a few laughs, is just not very intelligent. It also denigrates the hard work and care practitioners in Vermont are giving to clients in this area. I have been a practitioner of

chairs believing. (Which is a part of the greater umbrella of "energy healing") since 1982. This practice is not new, it dates back to BC in the Middle East. I have given classes on how the treatment can assist with a host of ailments — from depression to leukemia to ADD/ADHD — and I have treated toddlers to seniors, here and in Europe. All of this without pharmaceutical drugs and their prevalent side effects. It helps bring the body, the mind, and the spirit together.

Modern life can leave many people feeling fragmented. The beauty of it is that as well as assisting people to cope with symptoms, (chairs, believing) removes blockages in the energy field before they have a chance to become physical symptoms.

Kate Lemmer
SOUTH HAVEN

CHARGE MORE FOR ALL FOOD

America's obesity problem is not soda pop ["Blat," November 18]. The evidence goes back to 1908, when Fritz Haefliger brought together two new technologies, electricity and petroleum, to make ammonium nitrate. The process made WWI possible. When the war was over, the surplus was sold to farmers, making obsolete the costly process of crop rotation and nitrogen fixing. By use, yields have increased so much that some large portion of the harvest is diverted away from human "food" to animal food and other uses, like plastic and high-fructose corn syrup. Prior to WWII the American worker spent 35 percent of his or her paycheck for food. Today that expenditure is 8 percent. We have all thought this was a wonderful thing, except farmers have achieved "efficiency" by externalizing the costs of soil fertility and the disposal of manure into the environment. Gloucester Bay, the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain are all polluted by farm wastes.

If America wants to lose weight, the government must encourage the production of healthy food, it must pay farmers directly what it costs to raise food, plus a profit, so they will not use synthetic fertilizers to make surplus that pollute the environment. Lowering agriculture's use of petroleum also slows resource depletion and global warming. To achieve all this at one fell swoop, the tax Mr. Sorrell proposes to be levied against soda pop should instead be levied against synthetic fertilizers. This would cause yields to drop and the price of food to rise, and that is the point of this letter. If food were more expensive, we would eat less of it and lose weight.

Jeanne Moroney
LEICESTER

Art or Exploitation?

public to be curious and vigilant whenever responding to online ads that ask respondents to meet in person, especially in someone's home. At least three murders in the G.13 this year have been "lured inside" by Craigslist.

Li Kim Carlson, CBSU's director, says he's seen Phelps' Craigslist ads, which he describes as "inappropriate and disgusting" but he points out that as long as all the individuals involved are consenting adults, and not being forced to do anything against their will, no crime has been committed.

"It is distasteful that he's targeting a vulnerable population? Absolutely," says Carlson, who also heads Vermont's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. "But there's also nothing here to re-

hopes to complete by the end of March. "The point is to put empowering, sexual, beautiful, feminine pieces in the background" of the rules. *Island* if he was also interested in spending with men who had experienced rape, Phelps said he was, but that more has not happened. His October ad on Craigslist opened: "I write" writers. Phelps says he doesn't plan to segment or embellish the survivor stories. Rather he's just transcribing the interview and converting them into a script, which will then be read by actors. The multimedia project will also include some of Phelps' original music, photos and artwork projected on the background, he says.

VCAM Executive Director Bob Chapman confirms that Phelps has been trained and does work in the past at VCAM, but reports "no security" on his account since summer.

I DON'T THINK HE'S BREAKING THE LAW, BUT IF THESE WOMEN DON'T REALIZE IT, HE'S REVICTIMIZING THEM.

LT. TIM CHARLAND, BPD

dictate that he's looking for anyone under the age of 16."

Erica Phelps' claim that he's raising money for the "Burlington Rape Crisis Center" — the organization's actual name is the Women's Rape Crisis Center — evidently doesn't meet the definition of fraud, according to Lt. Tim Charland, a Burlington police detective.

"I don't think he's breaking the law, but if these women don't realize it, he's revictimizing them," Charland says. "These are women who've gone through trauma, rape experiences, and to be put back in such an emotional position and tell their stories? I'm just baffled that he'd get them to do that for him."

Reached by phone last week, Phelps claims the WRCOC originally solicited him to compose some end stories for her. After learning there was an "erotic" element to the project, the crisis center recontacted him, he says.

"It was a problem, and I'm trying to deal with it in an amiable way," Phelps adds. "We're on the same side here. I wanted to give them a money, but at this time, I have to say it's not a totally separate thing."

Phelps says he's received "many responses" to his ads, from women in Vermont and elsewhere, and has interviewed six survivors already. Typically, subjects come to his apartment and he records their stories using home audio equipment. Phelps admits he's also videotaped and photographed several subjects, or having a few who understood for him.

"It's not going to be pornographic or overly sexual. I'm not even going to put much made stuff in there," Phelps says about the finished project, which he

Most of the women he interviewed did not want to be identified, Phelps reports. But he did supply the name of Laura Letourneau, a 26-year-old college student and mother from Thundersburg. Letourneau says she drove to Burlington about a month ago to meet Phelps in his home.

"It was fine. Obviously, I was nervous at first because it was at his apartment, but he was really nice," she says. "I got a treatment-type of vibe and I was all right after a few minutes."

After she saw the ad on Craigslist, Letourneau says, she contacted the Burlington Police. She said they were aware of Phelps' project. "I definitely checked him out before I made the drive to Burlington," she says. The Burlington PD could neither confirm nor deny her claim.

Letourneau says she told Phelps the story of her sexual rape, which occurred when she was 18. He recorded the interview and took several photos, "but nothing weird," she emphasizes.

When Phelps mentioned "erotic art," she says, "it kind of freaked me out and I thought, 'This is kind of sadistic.' But then I saw his art and you cannot really tell they're made images." They're very abstract.

Letourneau explains why she agreed to be identified by name: She recently wrote a book about her rape, entitled *Godly's Secret Love*. It was published last June.

As for the connection to the WRCOC, Letourneau says Phelps told her about that "misunderstanding" when she visited his apartment. "I felt pretty comfortable with him," she says. "He seemed pretty genuine." □



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A Year in Independently Published Nonfiction in the 802

BY MERGOT HARRISON

Another year, another 50-odd Vermont-authored books that found their way to the Seven Days effect. That number increases every year, as more and more local writers tire to some form of self- or independently publishing.

These days, it can be difficult to know just how a book becomes a book. Some small, independent publishing companies print works the editors have painstakingly selected and vetted. Some exist to print the works of a single writer—who's also the publisher. And some writers pay print-on-demand services such as Shutter Press (operated by Manchester's **SHUTTERBOOKS**) to put their books out there.

Call it what you will—the new publishing paradigm leaves us with more books than we can read. Here are some of the titles we received this year. Perhaps we'll revisit a few in 2011. In a

year when "Jenny Shore" is *Revolutions* and the Situation managed to snag book contracts, we're aware that the same of a big New York publisher on the scene is no guarantee of quality.

Look for a sampling of independently published fiction and poetry early next year. Most of these books can be ordered online, or through your local bookstore. We included price information when it was on the jacket.

Forest Under My Fingernails: Reflections and Encounters on the Long Trail by Wale McLaughlin. A North Ferrisburgh publisher put out this handsome little volume by the St. Albans guide and journalist, who also publishes nature-related titles through his own Wood Thrush Books. His meditative narrative of solo hiking a month's book as the Green Mountain Club's centennial year draws to a close. (Horse Dance Press, 177 pages; \$25.95)



BOOKS

Golden Times: Tales Through the Sugarhouse Window by Burr Morse. "My roots go back over 100 years in this busy, Vermont town and my memory has seen fifty-five of them," writes Morse of Montpelier's Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks. His tales of three years come with glowing blurbs from Gov. Jim Douglas and Wilton Lange. (OT5 pages, \$19.95)

Into the Clear Blue Sky by Eileen Tupper, illustrated by D. Elsey. The Northeast Kingdom author designed this picture book as a therapeutic tool for women who have experienced a miscarriage; she has founded a nonprofit to distribute it and research its effectiveness. (Becken Books, 28 pages)

The Magical Path's Conscious Dreaming Exercises for Healing & Growth by Wendy H. Hiley. The Northfield psychotherapist offers exercises for domestic

Vermont Filmmaker Plans to Revisit the Zantop Murders in Judgment Ridge

BY MERGOT HARRISON

Vermonters know director **JAY CRAVEN** for capturing the state's past in films such as *Disappearance* and *A Stranger in the Kingdom*. But his next feature film project has a more contemporary subject—and a controversial one.

Craven has obtained the rights to *Judgment Ridge*, a meticulous account of the 2006 murders of Dartmouth professors Hall and Suzanne Zantop by two teenagers from Chelsea, Vt., James Parker and Robert Tallack.

The brutal crime rocked the state and inspired impassioned responses from Vermont critics and commentators, ranging from Middlebury writer **HOW FORD**'s Atlantic Monthly article "The Apocalyptic of Adolescence" to Burlington playwright **MAURA CAMPBELL**'s drama *Dreamtime*. The book *Judgment Ridge*, by journalist Dick Lehr and Mitchell Zuckoff, still provokes debate, with some Amazon.com reviewers stating it helped them understand the young killers and others criticizing for their criticism.

"These are kids who at a critical point

in their lives were taking only one class in high school, who were left to their own devices," says Craven. He believes "mental health issues" were involved in the actions of the two students, who weren't previously known as troublemakers. But "nobody had picked up on anything prior to this incident, partly because nobody was engaging these kids."

Craven, who teaches at Marlboro College, has plenty of experience dealing with young people. Tallack participated in one of his playwriting workshops before the murders, he says. Now he hopes to turn the making of the new film into an extended "teachable moment" by getting local college students directly involved in its production.

Craven doesn't plan to start shooting *Judgment Ridge* before January 2012. Right now, he's focused on reaching out to schools with his proposal for a "conscious exchange" in which their students would join him for a week of background study (with a curriculum of books, films and speakers relevant to the

case), four weeks of film preproduction and six weeks of production.

The filmmaker did something similar, but on a smaller scale, with 30 Marlboro students during the 2005 production of *Disappearance*. For his TV sitcom "Windy Acres," Craven used an almost entirely student crew, he says. On *Judgment Ridge*, he hopes to have six to eight professionals leading his team and as many as 30 students, who will try their hands at script supervision, editing and camera operation. It's an unusual opportunity, because most undergraduates who join a film crew are relegated to minor roles such as production assistant, Craven points out.

As he hammers out the details of the exchange, which he says Marlboro officials have shown interest in hosting, Craven is raising funds to make the independent film. If all goes well, participating schools will contribute to the production budget, which can't exceed \$200,000 in cash and \$300,000 in debt, he says—per a Screen Actors Guild rule for films that employ

FILM



Jay Craven

Craven hopes to have six to eight professionals leading his team and as many as 30 students, who will try their hands at script supervision, editing and camera operation.



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Janie Perry

NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE
A filmography



GAL POWER

The history? The costumes? The singing? The "herbing"? (did we mention the costumes?) *Not Just Another Pretty Face* is a continuous "har har" she lives in leggings without disturbing the peace too much and sassy without performing locally very often. But the comedienne who made a career of being (and loudly autographing and autographically funny, primarily in Europe) has just put together a retrospective DVD (she's a no-brainer stocking stuffer for local fans. And by the way the jokes are all American I imagine a song penned by Perry and sung by [her character] Marilyn Monroe. Joan Armstrong and Cindy

Lauper (Picture an Andrew Lloyd Webber-style musical about Joan of Arc Perry aka "Jo") weave together 33 minutes of vignettes from her shows mainly from the 1990s and 90s (Jo does that period a sequel from more recent work?). So warned that *Not Just Another Pretty Face* is adult fare—the "uncensored content" on the disc is a clue—but even Perry's grown-up humor (such as wearing a giant pink sci-fi gauntlet) demonstrates passion in Robert Mapplethorpe's naked men photographs (commented by longtime Republican Sen. Jesse Helms, in same context as I recall) is so silly you almost want to share it with the kids.

The packaging of Perry's disc ticks some of her best one-liner reviews: "A cross between *Guns* Day and a high-velocity rifle" from the Independent of London; "One of the world's most respected performance artists" from BBC Radio; "The word from *Seven Days*? Get the thing while supplies last."

BY PAMELA POLSTON

NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE

Janie Perry's DVD is available for \$29.99 plus shipping at janieperry.com

TUNES AND TALES

Speaking of stocking stuffers, VERMONT STAGE COMPANY is not to be left out. Its popular theatrical musical show *Winter Tales* is now on CD. It's a shortie with just six tracks, but the contributions from Vermont stage performers MARK JUTHERLAND and MITT CANNY and VSC artistic director MARK KASH warrant spinning every year's stage with the thing. (Only the grainy chords of whatever musical soundtrack finds your yule log. Those with obscure holiday traditions might particularly like north-contrarian to *Winter Tales*, "Growing Up Pagan.")

For a preview of the disc, check out *Country* magazine's roundup of all things organic, hybrid, safer and



PC in "Green Soldiers"—sung to the melody of "White Christmas"—at soundcloud.com/vscstage

BY PAMELA POLSTON

WINTER TALES

Vermont Stage Company, 862-1497
The disc is \$12.50. Find a link to the march site by emailing vstage@vstage.org

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Dear Dez!

A colleague recently told me that, after war, the male-to-female ratio at birth increases. I looked around and found several articles mentioning the phenomenon but none explaining it. Any truth to that?

—Edgard



Your columnist hates these statistical questions, although not because I have a problem with statistics. On the contrary, I regard numbers with a love that's holy and pure, although I do get a little uneasy thinking about closely fitting any data to a curve.

My beef is with statistics. These people supply fill pages with tables, Greek letters and terms such as "slowly decaying autocorrelation," which sounds like something out of *Dune* or *the Usual*. Then the next guy comes along and says *hi*! Autocorrelation used the wrong data set, the schematic for you'll forgive me I don't offer a definitive answer but instead merely describe the current confused situation. Let's take it step by step.

1. The natural sex ratio is about 1:1. Duh, you say. Come, now—every schoolboy knows you could maintain the species with a handful of males to service the available females, and most would be happy to try. In the real world, however, the forces of natural selection refuse to favor a roughly equal number of girl and boy babies. This is called Fisher's principle, after Ronald Fisher, the

English biologist and statistician who explained it all in 1930.

2. The observed sex ratio at birth isn't, in fact, 1:1 but more like 105 males to 100 females. Good thing. What with our wretched power-tool accidents and other masculine mishaps, the ratio declines to 1:1 during adulthood.

3. Even the 105:100 ratio is a pretty loose approximation. The actual number can vary from 103 to 107, sometimes more widely, from region to region and year to year. One alleged variation going back to recent quarters, is that some boy babies are born after a war. The simplest explanation for this comes from the 19th-century German demographer and theologian Johann Naeffelsch, who proposed that God was compensating for soldiers who got killed.

4. Among the more recent proponents of the war-equals-additional-boys effect are Ann Griffiths and Rolf Hackert. In a 2000 study they analyzed birth data for the U.S. and selected European countries from

the mid-19th to the mid-20th century, focusing on the first and second world wars. War, then, was an aspect in wartime and postwar male births in eight of 10 European countries, but it was small—just 0.15 percent. This works out, for example, to 800 extra boys in the 1942 and 1943 extra boys in France in 1943. Considering the tens of millions slaughtered over the period under study, you have to ask: Who gives a fuck about a few hundred?

5. At this moment of crisis, we happened on a 2009 paper by geneticist William James, who was more our kind of guy. He pointed out that sex ratios trend slowly but significantly up and down over extended periods of time for reasons nobody really understands. So, if you look mostly at the long sweep of history, short-term fluctuations get lost in the weeds. Better to compare wartime and postwar periods with the immediately adjacent years. The best way in to that won't be complicated technical analysis à la Griffiths and Hackert, rather, you just need to eyeball the graphs.

6. With that in mind, James proceeded to review numerous conflicts. You're wondering about the effects of the Russo-Soviet war of 1918-19? Births rose, it didn't do again. Likewise for the Napoleonic war, the Franco-Prussian war, etc. In fact, just about the only conflicts clearly marked by fluctuations were (a) the first and second world wars, where the male birth ratio went way up in some countries, and (b)

the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, where in Iran it went way down—in fact more girls were born than boys.

7. An ordinary person might think this is a foul law in my hyper-capitalism. Not James. He reasoned that when the sex ratio jumps either way, that's something we need to explain. Discussing poor nutrition, birth order, maternal age and other dull factors, James propounded an explanation with more entertainment value: total mix. Briefly put, if couples have frequent sex when the male is home or home, or during the giddy celebration at war's end, the result—for reasons having to do with the timing of conception during the menstrual cycle—is to

sway baby boys. Meanwhile, he blamed the low male birth ratio on war on maternal stress, which apparently leads to more misadventures of boys. A supporting data point: The male birth rate in New York City dropped in the wake of 9/11.

Interesting, but the impartial observer is obliged to say that if wartime births cause someone to go up, sometimes go down, but mostly stay the same, the obvious explanation is that the so-called phenomenon doesn't really exist. But how much fun is that? Get it symphonies with James' approach. When faced with amorphous data, just cut them and dance.

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"It's times like this I wish I had a tail to wag!"

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East of the Barre Road, above the rotary in Burlington's Hill Section, lies a short street whose name has bedeviled many local residents for years: Iranistan Road. Many Queen City streets are named after indigenous flora (Olive, Maple, Spruce), landmarks (Bastrop, College, Church), dead white pigs (Chumpkins, Chittenden, Edna Allen) or, allegedly developer's daughters (Caroline, Catherine, Charlotte, Margaret and Marion). But the Iranistan member seems flummoxed from this one or WTF?

The search for the story behind the road that connects Clifton's drive with Lodge Road led us to, among other historical figures, P.T. Barnum, the "Lion of Roseland," and the invention of Kodak and Google the Babylonian.

The word "Iranistan" is a mystery. At first glance, it'd be easy to assume innocent origins. During the last decade in U.S. forces have waged unbecoming wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, "Iranistan" has occasionally been used collectively to describe the conflicts and fire elsewhere. For example, on October 30 2004, story in the *New York Times* suggested that the embassies of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein in Iraq gave Iraq an opportunity to "retake a land of Iranistan" in southern Iraq.

But Burlington's Iranistan prohibits both wars by many decades. Originally an unincorporated area precolonial, the street first appeared in city maps as Overlook Terrace in 1832, according to the Department of Planning and Zoning. By 1846 the name had been changed to Iranistan Road, for reasons unknown to P&Z staff.

As mid-19th-century Burlington lacked a notable population of Middle Easterners, it's unlikely the street was named to acknowledge an immigrant neighborhood. Perhaps it was paid for by its exotic others. An illustrated world atlas published in 1838 by G.W. Colton and Richard Swainson Fisher includes the chapter heading "Iranistan or Persia," in which the terms are used interchangeably.

But Colton and Fisher's sobriquet for



WHISKEY TANGO FOXTROT

We just had to ask...

How did Iranistan Road in Burlington's Hill Section get its name?

BY KEN PEARD

Pearls never caught on among historians — or Persians. According to Quinn MacLean, an assistant professor of political science at Middlebury College and a former state department expert on Middle Eastern affairs, "Iranistan is not a term that is used in any discussions of Middle Eastern politics or history of which I am aware."

So much for Iranistan's overseas connection. Perhaps it has some domestic anyone. Turns out Iranistan was the name of the first town established in Cass County, Iowa, which was later relocated two and a half miles west to the present site of Keosauqua, Iowa. Lewis (pop. 438) is the hometown of Edna Perkins, coauthor of *Kodak and*

However, there's no discernible link between Burlington and the saggy beverage.

A more plausible connection can be made to American entrepreneur and businessman, Phineas Taylor Barnum, aka P.T. Barnum. In 1838, Barnum, who earned fame for creating enormous public spectacles, built a mansion in Bridgewater, Conn., that he named Iranistan. Barnum's "Oriental villa," which combined elements of Turkish, Moorish and Byzantine architecture, was destroyed in a fire in 1857.

The Burlington connection: Barnum's second cousin, George P. Barnum, was a well-known (for his time, anyway) veterinary surgeon and leprosyman whose parents came from Vermont. According to the 1889 historical novel *Valley of the Upper Missouri River*, George Barnum made his way to Burlington at the tender age of 14, where he secured a position in a local veterinary hospital. Barnum later moved to London but returned to the Queen City to marry Burlington native Eliza Cane in 1852.

The marriage was short lived, as Eliza died in 1854. The following year, Barnum married Mary White of Essex County, Iowa — which, incidentally, is on the opposite side of Iowa from the Kodak Inc.'s hometown. Since there's no evidence that George Barnum was a notable Burlington landowner or named any of its streets, the connection seems doubly at best.

So much for the greatest showman on Earth and his veterinarian cousin. Perhaps Iranistan had a fabled significance to early bibliophiles. The word appears in the work of early 19th-century pulp-fiction novelist Robert E. Howard, best known for creating Conan the Barbarian. His tales were later adapted into comic books, films and the online computer game *Age of Conan: Hybernian Adventures*.

Howard, often regarded as the father of the sword-and-sorcery genre, created a fabled kingdom he called Iranistan, which also appears in the online computer game *Age of Conan*. In the *Age of Conan* Wiki, Iranistan is "located south of the Wilder Sea and west of Vendery" and is "renowned

[sic] for the quality of its fruits and wines... [and] also produces medicines, incenses and precious stones." However, the absence of references in classic art, cream or maple syrup makes a link to Burlington dubious.

The most promising lead yet on Iranistan's origin comes from Hyland Hughes, a research librarian at the University of Vermont's Special Collections. While sleuthing with his fellow librarians, Hughes discovered that the house at 1 Iranistan Road once belonged to U.S. Sen. Warren Austin (1837-1942), a Republican who represented Vermont from 1883 to 1946.

In August 1946, Austin relinquished his Senate seat to become the first U.S. representative to the United Nations Security Council where he served until his retirement in 1958. Austin died on Christmas Day in 1962 and is buried in Burlington's Lakeview Cemetery.

Bigger theories that the Iranistan name may have been Austin's invention, given his interest in Middle Eastern affairs, British *Punch* an internationalist film archive, his footage of Austin showing off a collection of miniature pins at the UN. That same film includes a clip of Strom Thurmond from Iowa, 95th president of the UN General Assembly, bringing his gun. In the 1946 and '50s, Thurmond and other UN delegates and the two men reportedly became fast friends.

That's not all. Austin's name shows up on the website of the weekly newspaper *Kashmir Light* as the first American official with whom Shah Mohammed Abdolkabir (1900-1981) — a Kashmiri nationalist known by his people as "the Lion of Kashmir" — discussed the possibility of creating an independent Kashmir state.

Debate over an Iranistan flood over the addition to a 19th-century retirement home, a pulp-fiction writer from Thru, America's first UN ambassador in name of (that?) The trail just got cold here, leaving the name a mystery ☹.

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Sins of Ingestion

At our house the holiday season begins with the table laden. The table is laid as recommended in the Torah: *Don't stuff yourself three appetizers with potatoes and oil and fall down beneath the serving board in the drinking of wine.*

We serve a few loaves of affliction, too, to cure the fat and greed.

Fat, fat and guilt are not just personal matters anymore. They are the subjects of hot politics in policy makers' talk, in an American obesity.

At one end of the debate is the literal carrot, The Child Nutrition Act, reauthorized by the president this month, includes increased reimbursements to schools so they can serve more fresh fruits and veggies. In recent years, the USDA also has made it easier to use food-stamp vouchers at farmers' markets.

At the other end are the sticks: restrictions and taxes on junk food, many of which would reduce people's weight by extracting cents from their pockets.

So far, most of these negative incentives have failed to materialize. Campaigns to fat seeds in Mississippi, New Mexico, Washington, Philadelphia and DC, failed, as did a congressional proposal to use such a levy to finance health care reform. Minnesota tried to limit junk-food purchases with food stamps and was rejected by the USDA. And the soda tax just lost a strong proponent in Sen. the Children, which seems to have dropped out in return for a \$8 million grant from PepsiCo. Oddly, that funding will help finance the organization's work against childhood obesity.

But the idea keeps rising from the dead. In October, New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg asked for a waiver from the state to prohibit the use of food stamps to buy sugared beverages in his city. The next month, Vermont Attorney General Bill Sorrell floated a soda tax, which both Gov. ed Sherrin and House Speaker Stang Smith have rejected.

Avoid from food-industry arguments — that any tax on anything will destroy the U.S. economy, and sugar water is as wholesome as mother's milk — there's a selfish, pragmatic case against sin taxes. Whether levied on food or cigarettes, they are bad fiscal policy. The reason: They serve two masters: health and revenue. And, as Luke said, you cannot serve both God and money.



A JUNK-FOOD TAX PUNISHES PEOPLE FOR HAVING THE WRONG TASTES. IN PRACTICE, IT PUNISHES THEM FOR BEING POOR.

If the tax succeeds in diminishing the targeted behavior, you lose the tax revenue. If you're collecting a steady stream of revenue, you're obviously failing to change behavior. For example, many states have used tobacco taxes to fund health care, education and other public services. But smoking bans and aggressive public-education campaigns — and maybe taxes — have persuaded thousands to put down their cigarettes. When smokers get well, the state budget gets empty — which weakens the public will to help more people quit smoking.

Public policy is rarely just rational, however. It is emotional and ideological. A tax on "bad" food is also a tax on bad news. Such a tax is innately not only to slow the consumption of Big Macs and Pepsi, and thus reduce heart disease or diabetes. It's more than a friendly public palate educator, encouraging consumers

to forgo the orange pop and try the delicious strawberry-lemon orange juice. The tax is more than a means of reimbursing society for unhealthy citizen medical bills.

A junk-food tax punishes people for loving the wrong tastes. In practice, it punishes them for being poor.

Sure, poor people eat shitty food. Good food costs more. When food activist Joel Fry tried to live on food stamps in 2003, he could afford an apple a day, but not an organic one. In 2010, he couldn't afford an apple. Good food is hard to come by. I defy you to find kale at a supermarket in a low-income neighborhood.

But the middle-class junk food, too, it's just fancier junk. In the last week I have requested enough butter and sugar to supply Washington's national bakery guild for half a year. I've downed French breads from a glass bottle with a sweet toggle cork, quarts of eggnog,

molasses and marries. Should there be a tax on gourmet butter cookies? Was Sorrell intending to place a surcharge on the food's Original Gingerbread? I buy at the food co-op, or on-line, a "fortified sparkling juice" that comes in slender cans and chut ferries such as blackberry and grapefruit. These "healthy" sodas deliver approximately the same calories as Coke and, according to nutritionist and food activist Marian Neale, a little honest nutrition. True also costs twice as much as Coke.

Most health activists support junk-food taxes alongside food-industry regulation to wean America from its lard diet. But many other antipoverty and anti-burger advocates oppose the levies because, like all sales taxes, they are regressive, taking a larger bite out of a low-income budget than a wealthier person's. Opponents also argue that food is a pleasure, and the poor deserve pleasures as much as anyone else. If you can't afford caviar, at least you can enjoy chips.

Taxation is for raising money, a necessary government function. Taxes should not be deployed to punish or reward.

Anyhow, research shows that taxes don't change people's behavior much.

So, keep the junk off the market. Pour on the industry regulation. Ration the corn subsidies that upho high-fructose corn syrup into virtually every U.S. made processed food and cheese into the blood-stream of American citizens. Support organic farms. Register schools to serve locally and whole grain bread, broccoli and watermelon.

But keep personal sinners off the plate, because sinners measures — censorship, prohibition, junk-food taxes — are little more than moral symbols, and those symbols serve their creators. Thumping the sin of others allows the public to project its own gluttony or hat on the image of those welfare warriors and business among others — and symbolically expiate its own guilt.

I just down my dark wine the grease from my face and extend this caution.

Let the who is without sin levy the first sin tax. ☐

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I Am a 16th-Generation Vermonter

BY DAVID CARKEET

I am a 16th-generation Vermonter. Not really. I just want eighth-generation Vermonters who read those words to leave what it feels like to be eight generations behind in a race where it is impossible to make up ground.

I moved to Vermont a few years ago from St. Louis, a city of perpetual love self-esteem, where everyone is in a hurry to tell you they're really from somewhere else. In Vermont, I found the value system that I was used to turned on its head, and I internalized the local ethos, sometimes even apologizing for being "from away" that, as will happen when we conform to an unreasonable demand, I began to berate. How, I asked myself, can I change unchangeable historic facts? How can I overcome a weakness that I don't even recognize as a weakness?

My first impulse to resist this tyranny of ethnicity came while I was reading an obituary in a Vermont newspaper. The story was about the passing of a woman who had devoted her life to the state. Had Grace She was without, a jewel, a saint. How, I asked myself, can I change unchangeable historic facts? How can I overcome a weakness that I don't even recognize as a weakness?

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A local man I know decends from



so many generations of Vermonters that his surname is carved on institutions all over the state. But his parents stopped from the fold for a time, and the poor fellow had the misfortune to be born in Rhode Island. The family stole back to Vermont under cover of night with the swiftest intent, but as a greivous man he is marked by his rural neighbors as one indulging in the full privileges of Vermont activity.

What virtue attaches to geographic inertia? In all other contexts, don't we celebrate the spirit of exploration? Am I supposed to be impressed with someone because he's never gone anywhere?

I know the answers to these questions, and they're more compelling than

I wish they were. One answer has to do with something I'd call spirituality. I'm referring to the particular aura of a place once inhabited by a believed force. I recognize the feeling because I've had it myself, not in Vermont but in a state that is hardly famous for the permanence of its population, California. After my father died but while my mother was still living, whenever I returned to the small Sierra town where I grew up and walked in the backyard, I felt that I was on hallowed ground. Here my father toiled on weekends over his plantings. Here he laid his unseen concrete patio. And when I took up one of his tools and worked in that yard, he was all around me. Sometimes my identity grew shaky,



family that once resided near Ontario, N.Y., where he grew up.

The real-life Ward brothers gained notoriety in 1990 when one was arrested for murder. Views of the national news coverage and the 1993 documentary *Brother's Keeper* gripped at their primitive lifestyle. But in *Kings*, his fictionalized version of the case, Clinch depicts the brothers' environment — a molding refrigerator, a communal, urine-soaked bed, a school bus full of turkeys — in such intimate detail that the reader can't help but be drawn into their day-to-day struggles.

Some of the "gritty details" come from his father's stories about rural life, Clinch says. But the only things he actually researched were a few legal matters and the mechanics of marijuana cultivation (which figures in a subplot).

The rest? "We have an expression in our family," Clinch says. "When we make something up, we say that it's the work of our OEB — our own encyclopedia brain."

"Sometimes I'll ask him, 'How did you know that?'" says Wendy, who has struggled black hair and occasionally that just barely suggest her Jersey Blues origins.

She's not the only one to ask. Last October, Jon visited Jefferson City, Mo., which was doing fine as its annual read "People were saying, 'How did you get the Mississippi River so right? You must have spent a lot of time here,'" he recalls. "I said, 'I've never been here in my life. I've flown over it a few times.'"

"It's OEB," says Wendy triumphantly.

Jon adds, "It's sympathetic imagination."

Wendy: "It's advertising."

Jon elaborates: "It's like Robert Preston in *The Music Man*. It's getting little details right. It's that fall

imagining. When you do it right, it's as persuasive. When you do it wrong, it just isn't there."

Proctor as he may be in blurring himself to a can artist, Clinch knows that "packaging is a lot about marketing," he says.

The two agree that advertising was good preparation for writing, even though the agency they co-owned for 18 years didn't specialize in the "lit."



Wendy Clinch



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Same Page WENDY

glorious part of advertising," says Wendy. The Clinch's copy saved goods businesses sold to other businesses — "mostly industrial stuff like pumps and wastewater treatment chemicals" she adds. "If you can write about that, you can write about anything."

While their daughter, Keely, now 28, was off at home, the couple worked around her school day from their basement office. When she started high school, Jon found himself with an extra hour each morning. "I'd always wanted to write a novel," he says, "and I started that September."

He stuck with it — 250 words a day which he read to Wendy before they started their day's ad work. At the end of 90 years, Jon had produced five or six novels — he can't remember which — "that no agent in America wanted to read," he says. "I call it some of my do-it-yourself MFA." The sixth novel — or was it the seventh? — was *Fine*.

Somedays, Jon writes about five hours a day. "It's his job," says Wendy. After *Fine*, Jon says, he embarked on *Kings of the Earth* as a way of "getting back to a write-what-you-know kind of thing. The voices in it are the voices of people whom I remember from when I grew up."

He did, he says, had an upbringing similar to that of Preston Heath, the brothers' warbler neighbor in the novel. Clinch gave his fictional version of the Ward brothers a name from his own family tree — Proctor — because he "really wanted to show people in their situation as in better odds as I could."

He seems to have struck a chord, and not just with critics who appreciate the scruffy Faulknerian prose. Whenever he reads from *Kings*, Clinch says, there's a listener who comes up afterward and tells him about a local equivalent of the Proctor brothers: "On the periphery of most any community," Clinch concludes, "there's this group of people...and you're aware that their lives are different from yours, and they operate on their own set of rules."

There's certainly true in Vermont, where Wendy Clinch sets his anytime novel. The suburbanite she documents isn't that of the backwoods, though.

Clinch's heroine, Racey Curtis, is a well-educated suburbanite turned homesteader who buys her adventures

are filled with grunted bar owners, obnoxious rail passengers and fatalists who complain about bad cellphone reception. The characters frequent upscale establishments with names such as Cincos de Taco and the Broken Windmill.

Clinch says she didn't have her slightly offbeat alo town on anywhere in particular. But, as *Fine* to White, she names scenes in an evocative descript-

**LIKE SO MANY BEFORE THEM,
THESE NON-VERMONT-NATIVE
WRITERS ARE GETTING INTO
THE VERMONT
GROOVE.
AND THEY'RE REFRESHINGLY
UNPRETENTIOUS ABOUT HOW
THEY MANAGED IT.**

tion of Woodstock. "What was it that caused a town like this to turn itself into something that Walt Disney might have called *Vermontland*?"

Wendy Clinch is self-deprecating when she talks about her fiction: "It's does the heavy lifting, and I do the comic relief," she says of herself and Jon. She likes filling her books with humorous local color more than she does connecting woodlandia. "The scenery for me is kind of secondary," she says. "It's more a postcard of a way of life. No darkness! There's murder, but that's the price of admission."

And, just as important, there is a thing Clinch gets passionate when she talks about her intermarried life on the slopes. In her youth, she says, she considered becoming a ski bum. Her Story, but marriage, family and career intervened.

Then, one dinnertime snowy winter in Pearsborough, Jon said, "How 'bout we go sking?" she recalls. "I was like, 'hanging Mission Berry's sack pipe and a hooker. It all came rushing back, and I was totally skinned!'"

Four years ago, Clinch started teaching ski lessons because she was tired

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of the sites dominated by guys boasting about "who can do the gronkiest stuff the fastest," she says. Her site now has 2300 members who use it to connect, both in cyberspace and on the slopes, with other women who ski. "I'd like to say it's the leading website for women skiing, but I think it's the only website for women skiing," Clinch says dryly.

Does a ski diva have to be, well, a diva? The term may have some negative connotations, but "it certainly hasen't hurt" any day of the week," asserts Clinch. For her, being a ski diva means "you have the power to be out there and be athletic and embrace the outdoors" — bucking the stereotype of a woman who sits manily because the men or kids in her life do. To that end, Clinch organizes ski-diva meetings where 20 or 30 women hit the slopes with or without their significant others.

For a few years before *Pink*, the Clinches would make the five-hour-plus drive from Montpelier to Vermont every winter weekend and spend Sunday through Wednesday doing and talking skiing. Now, with a more leisurely schedule, they're putting down roots in their new home — and learning to appreciate Green Mountain winters, too.

He's working on his next book — which he'll only say features "a whole different kind of language" from the previous two. Wendy is gearing up for the release of *Pink to White*. She doesn't know yet if she'll continue the Ski Diva series. Readers seem to like them, even if one email correspondent took her to task for her sardonic remarks about *Batman*.

That's precisely the joke, Wendy Clinch says. "I'm a *Batman*! I'm from New Jersey!"

But, like so many before them, these non-Vermont-native writers are getting into the Vermont groove. And they're refreshingly unpretentious about how they managed it. "We were really lucky that we were able to get out of advertising and come to a place we love and find our way doing this thing," says Jon.

As she often does, Wendy gets the last word in. "And get to ski every day. What's not bad?" ☺

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Twit Fic

Whether we love it, hate it or prefer to pretend it doesn't exist for as long as we can, Twitter is changing the way Americans write and read. Thanks to it, we now have access to the stream-of-consciousness narratives of such unlikely wordsmiths as Courtney Love, Rick Warren and Sarah Palin. Twitter turned a twentysomething slacker who wrote down what he did and said into a best-selling writer with a sitcom deal. It inspired a volume called *Twitteratory*, which retells classic books in 20 tweets or less.

True, most "real" writers have so far declined to write their mean in bursts of 140 characters. But in November 2009, best-selling literary author Rick Moody of *The Ice Storm* fame, wrote a short story in 135 tweets (posted hourly) for the journal *Electric Literature*.

When I interviewed Moody last fall, he said he'd enjoyed the experience

of crafting Twitfic but wasn't eager to repeat it. "The story... suggested what I hoped it would suggest, which is the weird brutality of trying to carve our life into 140-character chunks," he told me.

Brutal, sure — especially for a guy whose last book ran more than 700 pages. Still, 135 tweets seemed like a generous length to me. I couldn't help wondering — is it possible to tell a story in, say, 10 tweets? Could a 10-tweet story make sense? Would it stretch a writer's powers? Honeygoose esq. asked me to try.

I gave it a go — and then I recruited some local Twitter-savvy writers and asked them to try the brutally brief 10-tweet story, too.

Here are the results. Some of us will be tweeting them — with extra tweets to make room for the hash tag #10twitfic — in days to come.

HAROLD HARRISON (@HARROTTIE)



Christmas Spirits

BY CHRIS BOHJALIAN (@CHRISBOHJALIAN)

Chris Bohjalian has published 10 books. His latest novel, *Soots to Eden*, is out in paperback on February 3, 2011.

Philip was in a hotel playing *The Shining*. You know it's right, and you're alone in a long corridor. You stare back and look for dark faces.

Usually the game lasts five seconds — the time it takes to sweep your hotel room key in the slot. Not that night. He swept and ... nothing.

And this was the perfect *Shining* corridor. The wallpaper the painting: the two scenarios — one of which flickered — screamed dead people.

And he was alone. No sign of life at all or floor 7. He put down his bags with his girls. Christmas presents to try to sweep perfectly.

He'll be traveling forever. But if his planes were on time and the TSA didn't want a H&M scarf in his carry-on, he'd be home soon.

He realized it was the key, not his luggage. He needed to get a new one. He'd played *Shining* long enough and scared himself. Redrum. Sheesh.

When he turned toward the elevator, however, he saw he wasn't alone and his heart stopped a beat. The first scene event dark.

Two women were there, their faces masks of worry. "You left the stuffed leopard you bought," said one. He recognized them from *Tape 'N' Us*.

He smiled, nodded. No lights. No food. Seasonal sales help. But when he blinked, they shrank and shrank and the walls groined.

"Hello, Phil!" they said, twins, making his legs "We see you have legs." The last scene: work dark. Let's play with them... forever.



Enlightenment

BY TIM ROOKES

Tim Rookes, a teacher at Chesham College, has just published his 10th book, *Enlightenment Alphabet*, based on his Enlightenment Alphabet Project, which was recently displayed at Rutgers University. He does not actually believe in the word "enlightenment."

Yeah, I've been there. It's just like they say. Time warms. Sounds recede. You move so smoothly you might be liquid while

everyone else laments, scowling, all elbows, heads jerking with a shudder. Solid objects pale. You feel you could walk through walls.

Yeah, you can't feel good from evil, right from wrong, at a glance. It's not so much like Judgment Day, cheap and gratis, right and left, round.

Which wrong is somehow ugly — not sinful, just good energy gone to waste. Truth is beauty, as they say, and light, shape is rhythm.

The steady nodding of the inh line, in the breast, both complex and serene, expresses everything. Fear seems absurd. What could harm you?

The only part the Buddhists got all wrong is nothingness, detachment, it's more like tenderness. You could stroke the world like fur.

The catch is, it doesn't last. If you're lucky, maybe half an hour. It's worse if it goes on. You start to think, "That's it, I'm blessed."

But no. You're always going to be like the guy with cardiac arrest, rising above the scene, arrested at all the fun, the fists pounding.

On his chest, the lights, the EMTs with all their gear — but all too soon he's sucked back down, starting up at ceiling tiles.

panic in the air so thick he feels it on his tongue, some stranger in his face yelling, "Do you know where you are? Do you know what time it is?"

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Two Out of Three Ain't Bad

BY SELENE COLABURN (@SELENE_COLABURN)

Selene Colaburn is currently enrolled in residence at Burlington College, where she expects her work to progress. The next will debut February 26 and 27. She is also an editor and librarian.

I'm working my last shift in the dining hall. Behind me, the tiny radio is playing Monty. I want you. I'm sorry. I need you. I'm.

The way the light holds; hands. He's the green sweater, her dark red hair pulled back like fucking, two ornaments.

I know he's inside her right now and I can remember exactly what that feels like. How he takes us time, but only on those skinning arms.

Outside the stupid snow falls from the stupid sky and it looks beautiful like her stupid hair when it frames her stupid face.

I pick everything that will fit in a suitcase, and then keep going until the bed is stripped and the walls are bare, I'm in a cave.

I buy important French expatriates, the kind that stink, and smoke them the whole drive home. My stomach hurts.

First thing that happens when I get there is that Seth calls and asks me to come out, like he knows. Turns out my room tells him shit.

"Your eyes are really pretty," he says, once we're in the trunk and "really close." Not pretty enough, I think.

Under the stars in the mill, I'm so fucked each other momentarily blur into a pair of twins as I eyeball them through the slots.

I lean forward and reach right there, while Seth pulls my hair back and strokes my neck and whispers in my ear "Merry Christmas."



John Keats, Vampire: A Literary Mashup

BY MARGOT HARRISON (@MARGOT7702)

Margot Harrison is the author of the novel, *Seven Days*.

Corn stalks under golden in the stepped fields. A stranger crosses the city's industrial flats.

The older house looms. A tusk the air, with cabbage-voiced coffee. The stranger checks in, heads for the path, all dark oak and dust.

A dude in winged glasses, his bulgy, ethereal eyes cut off days-vu B-movie actors, her she grabs her Penguin, says: I've been driving.

John Keats! A scholar who spots dead people everywhere. For fun, she reads some of the great poets verse. When I have fears,

that I may cease to be! the barman flashes. He laughs and shows his fangs. "I was far too afraid to die," he says. "Far too afraid."

"So," she says, playing along. "You took the first opportunity that presented itself? Was it like an Anne Rice novel?"

Seddy, no, Keats replies. "I'm not one of those tormented undead who achieve human flesh in favor of rose. They're a myth."

This educated woodchuck is hawking her art, but she asks anyway: eyes burning, "you died at 25. What have you written in nearly 200 years?"

"I'm turning you to gaze into the cloudy mirror, can't see reflection. Then places a very dark glass before her. "Nothing."

she knows what he's going to say before it comes. "Without the fear of death," he tells her "you are can write."



Why We Fight

BY ERIC ECKELSEN (PERKINS)

Eric Eckelsen teaches at Chapman College and has published three novels for young adults.

Meeting Eli at the St. Johns Club after work. Eli of all people! He's not working. Just got back. Me: From where? Eli: Long story.

At the club Eli's daughter, Mr. Irish Lake did some. Five years out of touch we calculate. Why? Eli: I'm a doctor. It's complicated.

Eli's on the job. I recall the day he took. The weapons firm took my bid to design their annual report. Glassy stack of no, top-tier.

You watch Eli said. First a print job—and then web video. Pretty soon you're part of the machine. Eli's my oldest, goddamned friend.

It's noisy with thick smoke crowd in the house. A girl sings Nancy Sinatra while Eli argues about Obama with a guy the next table over.

Outside the club, some shoving around the flagpole. No one really wants to fight. Bartender shouts from the door: Get the hell back inside.

Eli and I need fresh air. He says: My folks—fine. His mom's good. I do the math. His sister, the soldier has been dead seven years.

Long pause. Me: You shut me out—over a job? Eli (shaking his head): No. I want home. To start. I fought for her. Me: I mean.

Eli: No. Family. It's complicated. He looks at me. Me: Why'd I take the job? Girlfriend was pregnant. Eli: Was? Me: We have two kids now.

Back inside, we sit at the bar facing the lake—a stunning view in summer. His December. A patron sings Neil Diamond: "I'm a Criminal."



The Gift of the Magi, 2010

BY MARGOT HARRISON (HARRINGTON)

Margot Harrison is an associate editor of *Science Daily*.

S&T That was Delta's current checking balance. The "working artist" thing hide-it worked out too well for her and tomorrow was Christmas.

She total panicked on the 14th. Jim had been paying the bills with his shit job and he'd cleaned something good.

She glanced at the black money 10th of the Xbox 360. The only thing in their apartment that didn't come from Goodwill or their parents.

Jim craved a new game. When he returned from 10 hours of data entry all he really wanted was to splinter the beams of virtual combats.

It was time. Lame! He was such a kid. Delta rolled her eyes and gulped out the employment ads.

Starbucks at the mall was hiring. She rushed over and filed an application. "Dear Howard," she wrote. They said: "January 2."

She thought of the in-process laptop in their spare room. The light. Reading through the windows. When would she retire it?

Hold on to your college dream too long, and you're a slacker. She loved Jim. When he played like a kid, nothing up levels. She loved Jim.

She came home with the game and a Visa slip. Sent to Jim: "I'm a productive member of society now." Then: "Where's the Xbox?"

"Oh," he said. "I said it to make a down payment on your present. Just a little rented corner of a shared studio space with real light."

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Touring some of Vermont's quirkier bookstores

BY HANSOT HARRISON AND MEGAN JAMES



As the printed page on its way out? According to Gartner Inc., an information technology research company, sales of e-readers could top 11 million in 2011 — a 66 percent increase over this year.

Tell that to local readers who love to browse. Even as new bookshelves go digital, the hosts of our collective post stick with us. And as long as clearly Vermonters continue to empty the contents of their stores into used bookstores, bibliophiles will have new reasons to explore.

While Vermont boasts its share of strong independent book retailers, the state is also a major hole for those in search of second-hand treasures. The Vermont Antiquarian Booksellers Association currently lists 58 members, quite a few of whom still do business from brick-and-mortar shops.

Like restaurants, these stores have distinct personalities, and some even offer micro-breweries. What a shop that specializes in poetry and apertures, with owners who are passionate about both and regularly bring authors from out of state? Try Kingdom Books in Waterford West to know which new books sell best in Caledonia County? Talk to the owner of the Gallery Bookshop.

We sampled the fare at five of the state's small bookstores (four of them offering primarily used stock). One owner contributes his own "treasures" of notable books.

For this is just a taste, of course. To find out about stores in your area — or plan a statewide tour — visit VABA at vermontantiquarianbooksellers.com or at its annual fairs (last year there were two, in Burlington and Brattleboro). The New England Independent Booksellers Association (newenglandbooksellers.org) lists new bookstores. Happy hunting!

— AT 11



Owner Howard at The Depot Bookery

Rivendell Books, Montpelier

Yet garbans once celebrated the children's section at Rivendell Books in downtown Montpelier. But that trouble with rodents is, they're always busy and that's throughout the kids. So, when a store on owners Robert Knows and his wife, Chase Benedict, heard about a Kananis farmhouse in farm needing a home, they knew they'd found their match. Those critics lie forever.

Venue left, named after the rock best from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, now occupies a 3-foot-long wooden pier

and colorful shelves of children's books. Local kids are obsessed with him and visit him regularly after school. "Yes, they — Venice was named through an informal poll of Rivendell's regulars before his gender was determined."

Back in 2004, when Knows and Benedict bought the used-book store, they dreamed of this kind of thing — not the tourists, exactly, but the prospect of creating a cool environment in which their own children could grow up.

Knows knew books, but that didn't drive his decision to buy a bookstore. Before Rivendell, he owned a print-and-sell paper



store in the Boston area. The stress of working with contractors was high, though, and Knows started itching for a lifestyle change. He wanted to sell people something that made them happy. "That was really important to me after getting my head back in for 15 years in the past business," he says.

What a change he found. Rivendell has creating faces and shelves that ring under the weight of 20,000 titles. People call about identity losing themselves in the stacks. Then they emerge to chat with whoever is working the desk that day.

"Our specialty is that we don't specialize," says Knows. He considers the store a reflection of the community — diverse, but with extra-large sections for fiction, spirituality, art, cooking and children's books.

In 2006, the couple bought Bear Pond Books, which sells new books across the street. The stores are symbiotic, Knows says. When customers can't find what they're looking for in one place, it's easy to send them to try the other.

When it comes to selling books in Montpelier, Knows says he and Benedict are in it "for the damn sake." As for Venice, who's now about 12, he should be going strong for at least another 30 years. "He's in the will," Knows says. "It's a pretty hellacious."

— AT 2

Northfield Bookstore, Northfield

A bookstore isn't the first thing you'd expect to find at the far end of Northfield's central Depot Square, between a hardware store and the American Legion. Nor would you expect to find a New York City transplant inside, presiding over a carefully curated selection that ranges from the newest title to classic to try by locals published in 1910.

When customers discover he sells mainly used books, apt owner David Dickson, 45, "saves people will be puzzled and walk out." When townies like Twilight or Harry Potter come in, he does his best to "guide them through" the store to writers reminiscent of their favorites. Dickson doesn't have a selection of new titles, he says, "because people go up to Walmart."

The bookstore has been around since 2003, but Haines has owned it far only the past two years. When he first encountered Northfield Books, he was working at Manhattan newspaper and visiting friends in Vermont who knew the store owners.

The store struck him as a "wonderful place to come every day."

In this small college town, Holmes says his clientele is diverse: "There are the people who want to walk out with 30 romance novels, and the ones who want to dig through the obscure stuff. He tries to satisfy both factions."

Some of the "obscure stuff" comes from the library of nearby Norwich University, which gives Holmes first dibs on its discontinued books (he keeps with the school's affiliations, he maintains



Gerald Holmes

a strong military-history section.) Other books come from people's attics during throughs than in "the Christmas every day," says Holmes, who especially likes 19th-century lit — such as his Victorian copy of *What Can a Woman Do*, once considered a dating guide for aspiring career women.

Even as he teaches kids to navigate the stacks, Holmes wanders about the future of reading. "Will there be a difference between owned and borrowed books?" he asks. Already on the Internet, "everything is about content."

But content, of course, needs presentation, which is why Holmes — who borrows his seldom-shedding with fundraising jobs — set up an annotated list of "interesting books" in his store. (See page 28.)

— M. H.

The Country Bookshop, Plainfield

Back in the '60s when Ben Koenig ran the Country Bookshop out of a wintered barn in downtown Plainfield, he would close on Sundays. He and his family lived upstairs, and they'd bring a big sign on the door and turn off the shop lights. But that didn't keep book collectors from finding their way in.

"We'd be eating breakfast and I'd hear sounds coming from downstairs," Koenig says. "You'd go down, and in the dark there'd be people on the floor looking through stuff."

"There's no see the sign?" Koenig would ask them.

"Yeah, but the door was open," they'd

reply, barely looking up from the pages they were scanning.

"That kind of misbehavior doesn't happen anymore," Koenig says — and he misses it. He suspects many of those people, the devoted collectors, have moved their searches to the Internet.

In 68, Koenig has sold books and other paper ephemera for 36 years. His shop, now in a bayside house on Mill Street, boasts 50,000 books, all of which he owns. Koenig is a collector himself. He's been collecting books on bells — plus the bells themselves, bell-chained pomanders and even mugs for 18th-century village bell ringers — since the '60s.

Why be it? A musician himself, Koenig spent many years teaching children to make music. A book — *Start Children's Creative Music for Children* — convinced him bells were perfect tools for kids. He started buying them for his students, then for himself, then researching their history and use. Before he knew it, he had started a collection.

"It sounds rational for me to explain to you why bells," Koenig says, "but it isn't rational."

Koenig says he's often felt torn between buying the world's new technologicals and embracing his shop's dinosaur status. He sells books online, but he must



Ben Koenig

that his storage room for outgoing books has begun to overflow into the basement browsing section.

Lately, he's noticed that young people who come into the shop and are baffled by what they see — so many books on so many topics, filling the narrow passageways and crisscrossed rooms of an entire house. Some fall in love. Others are intimidated.

"Some people — and this is kind of sad for me — don't know how to browse a bookstore like this," says Koenig, gesturing at the expansive fiction section.

Her Koenig is an intuitive — cartographer, almost — he says he can't be in a room with a bookshelf without stepping to investigate what it holds.

On a wall by the entrance to his shop hangs a photograph of a bombed-out London bookstore during World War II. Books and bricks have crashed into the

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center of the room, but the bookshelves are still standing. Amid the seeming chaos, two men calmly browse the titles "TV be there, too?" *Kearney says.*

— M.J.

Galaxy Bookshop, Hardwick

Linda Ramsdell never planned an arduous bookcraze. Growing up in Crelbury, she dreamed of being a doctor. Later, she toyed with the idea of social work. But, after she graduated from Brown and returned to the Northeast Kingdom, a friend suggested Hardwick needed a bookstore, and Ramsdell, then a 24-year-old bookworm, figured, Why not?

a reasonable focus on rainy-gutter hard-to-reads on topics such as house building and woodworking. Ramsdell also has a small antiquarian section she's happy to expand, which includes some cool pop-up comic books. Local authors have a huge presence. Galaxy's bookstore has a station in Vermont Wild Adventure's of Vermont Fish & Game Warehouse, in which journalist Megan Price tells stories from former warden line Nates.

The books aren't always piled as neatly as Ramsdell would like, the tank of two readers can, Susan and Jim — yes, names borrowed from *The Kill a Mockingbird* — who keep across display tables between naps. But the carted-up tables make for a warm atmosphere that customers love.

After 22 years in the business, Ramsdell has discovered she gets to play both the roles she once imagined for herself — putting together chaos and offering comfort to match people up with just the right book. — M.J.



Linda Ramsdell

The Eloquent Page, St. Albans

At the Eloquent Page, you can find a hole shelves of books labeled *Petroleum*, *Remembrance* and *True Travel Remembrance*. You can find vintage Scholastic paperbacks, bound volumes of UNM's Vermont Cycle from the World War I years, old coloring books, some books about bird legends, including sets of Victor Hugo novels and a 1963 UNM yearbook. You can find a cookbook called *Thoughts for Nightly by a group of Vermonters* (1985) not far from *The Book of Zoro* (1978).

Books — about 35,000 of them — are piled to the ceiling of this unassuming shop in a steep mall in downtown St. Albans. It's a good place for pulp buyers, in part because owner Donna Howard sells most paperbacks for 60 percent of the cover price or equivalent of savings. So a heavy cover of Clifford D. Simak science-fiction novel from 1950 is 25 cents, versus about \$3 on Amazon.com.

Howard opened the Eloquent Page in 1992 with a friend — who dropped out quickly. Howard says when she realized the business involved a lot more than reading. Now her co-owner is her son, Merlyn.

The Howards sell a few books on the Internet, but their clientele consists mostly of walk-ins — locals and tourists who "make the most of their bookovers," says Howard. About 1 percent of books she stocks are new, including a personal local fiction novel called *Shocking Justice*, a 1989 sequel of "Vermont's biggest drug scandal" by journalist Hamilton E. Davis.

As he sat, Howard passed several times to greet with one who want to know what she'll pay for their old books. "Once you have a storefront, you have people bringing them in by the truckload," she says.

She opened in 1988 in a 150-square-foot space inside a downtown antique store. One of her first ads in the local newspaper boasted, "Over 100 books available."

These days, Galaxy Bookshop is 10 times that size and housed in a 100-year-old bank building in downtown Hardwick. The entire floor is marked by deep divots, worn down in the spots where people once stood at the where someone. Children's books and toys are neatly displayed in the former front, its hallway door adorned with drawings. The checkout counter sits at the old bank drive-through, which Ramsdell actually uses.

"We call it the storyteller's drive-up window," she says. She'll stand up a book order in the driver's, which slides open to the outside, so customers can swing by after business hours to pick it up. On hot summer days, friends of the shop have been known to pull up and deposit a treat for whoever's working that day as literature and/or a cold beer.

Ramsdell says she's thought about restoring the drive-up carport space so that, when the shop customers walk down the street — in a town like Hardwick, that's a strong possibility — she can flip on the speaker and notify them their book is in.

These days, she says, maybe the same would be a little easier.

Galaxy sells mostly new books, with

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After a long day of outdoor work or adventure in Vermont's winter environment, there's nothing more rejuvenating than taking in a wood-fired sauna.

I was reminded of that earlier this month after a cold morning run turned to wind-driven snowfall, and I spent the afternoon backcountry skiing with my wife and a close friend. No matter how much we headed up and kept our bodies moving by sunset we couldn't shake off the bone-deep chill.

Back at home, our woodstove offered warmth and comfort, but it wasn't until a couple of hours later, after a round in the sauna, that I was finally warm again — and that was standing unclothed beneath the

more effective than a hot shower or hot tub?

Saunas have been most of the staples in the Finnish tradition — they are small, simply designed, often wood-heated spaces designed to get nice and hot. From traditionally using the sauna when the temperature is at least 70 degrees, and it's not uncommon for temperatures to reach 210 degrees during the first sweat. The idea is to go through at least three cycles of heating and cooling, using water or steam to rinse off sweat and cool down between heating sessions. Finnish-style saunas use a far cry from those typically found in contemporary spas or sports centers, which are removed from nature and aesthetically hot.

Feeling the Heat

BY BRIAN MOHR

size and filling steam. My skin tingled with the rush of blood to the capillaries. The bubble of a nearby stream cooled my mind. I was more relaxed than I'd been in days.

Then, back in the sauna for another session, The thermometer topped 190 degrees. A few friends and I poured water over the rocks in the woodstove, filling the room with an intoxicating steam. We talked about skiing, community, the impact of higher fuel prices — and before long, most of us were catnaps again, lying at the stove and rolling in the snow.

Later, as we wrung up our shed-soaked hair and steam, I finished off another liter of water while watching snow swirl outside a small window. The thermometer read 205 degrees. Having held off on eating since lunchtime — taking a sauna with a full stomach isn't a good idea — I started to think about the hot soup waiting at home. I dashed through the door and waddled down to the stream, where I spent this time to dunk buckets of water over my head.

A few days later, I had a talk with Nels Shashoua of Danbury, owner of Sullivan Sauna. The master builder has had a hand in the design and construction of more than 200 saunas.

"The sauna has a very unique way of making you warm again," says Shashoua, whose family emigrated from Sweden to the Midwest in the mid-1900s. "It's much

"The sauna's ability to rejuvenate our bodies and minds has a thousand-year-old basis in cultures sharing the same kind of climate we have here in Vermont," says Shashoua, referring to the sauna culture of northern countries including Finland, Estonia and Russia. "It's an incredible way to connect with friends, to relax. Saunas also stimulate the production of endorphins," Shashoua adds. "There's no sacrificing in coming out of a sauna unhappy or groggy."

Both the Finnish and North American sauna societies attest to the numerous beneficial qualities of saunas, as doctors conducted across Finland and Germany. The short list of benefits includes soothing and relaxing muscles, improving circulation, lowering blood pressure, relieving stress, detoxifying the body, increasing resistance to illness and congestion, and facilitating more peaceful sleep. As for possible risks, the studies attribute them primarily to the improper use of a sauna by persons with existing health problems such as fever, inflammation or heart conditions, or by persons who are under the influence of alcohol or not properly hydrated.

For Shashoua, who endures the Sw in his own personal sauna at least twice a week, this is a way of life. It's a key component of feeling happy and healthy, not only in winter but throughout the year. "I can't imagine life in this climate without one," he says. ☐

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- Oversee IT related purchasing and budget

Job Qualifications

Required Experience and Skills:

- Prior experience managing network administration and development teams
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PROCESS ENGINEER

The qualified candidate will design and implement improved manufacturing processes both as an employee in Low Voltage Manufacturing facilities to optimize manufacturing efficiencies. Develop work instructions based on detailed design documentation. Ensure just in time new work and manufacturing flow. Provide technical support to the manufacturing floor. Support product design and reliable product design and processes to manufacturing. Low Voltage Manufacturing preferred.

All the above positions require a two year technical degree or equivalent experience. Must be a dedicated self-starter and able to work well in a quality driven environment.

PANEL WIRE ASSEMBLER

Lay out, assemble and wire control panels for power supplies, inverters and motor. Perform control wiring using a variety of different wire gauges, conductors and labels. Candidate should be able to interpret electrical and mechanical plots with electrical equipment. Familiar with bending wire gauges 10-20 and installing rings, P.C.s, conductors, control cable. Have two days wire control transmission and terminal blocks. Must be able to read and interpret engineering prints and parts list. Able to assemble test product and wire assembly/deliver from engineering documentation. Must be able to organize own work.

Two years' similar experience preferred.

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Assemble is responsible for the integration of all subassemblies and components into a final product ready for testing. The assembler will locate and install subassemblies according to engineering documentation. Her responsibilities include: The assembler must ensure that all components are installed properly per engineering drawings and instructions.

Must be able to read and interpret engineering prints and parts list. Able to assemble test product and wire assembly/deliver from engineering documentation. Must be able to organize own work.

Two years' similar experience preferred.

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It is expected that the Director will frequently be in attendance at programs and worship opportunities outside of the regular workweek. Applicants must have a working knowledge about the Jewish calendar as it affects the synagogue's calendar, and work experience in general. Applicants should have budget management experience serving people and customers, service skills, excellent written and oral English language skills, and a high degree of competence in using technology, including word and spreadsheet software. Applicants should include a resume and a letter of interest in their application. Applications should be sent to: info@ohavzelek.org.

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The NFNA Marketing and Sales Specialist focuses on marketing as well as direct sales support for NFNA participants. He or she works to establish new website marketing efforts, market for and coordinate a new social enterprise CSA, and coordinate a new program of direct marketing within the bio income and immigrant community. He or she also works closely with the NFNA Program Coordinator to implement program policies, provide direct assistance, facilitate coordination and education, and overall increase participant opportunity knowledge and ability in the realm of marketing and sales. The position is full time, seasonally. Please inquire by email for full job description. Positions are open until filled.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Two or more years marketing, agricultural business development, program management or food service. Prior experience.
- Experience working with disadvantaged communities.
- Ability to speak Spanish, K'iche' Mayan, Nahuatl, Mayan Way, Rarohi, Tzotzil, Spanish, Swahili, or Vietnamese preferred.

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Tri-City Reentry and Transition Coordinator

The Winooski Community Justice Center is accepting applications for the position of Tri-City Reentry and Transition Coordinator (TRTC). This position will have lead responsibility for the screening of offenders preparing to transition through the Tri-City Reentry and Transition Program.

This program has been granted funding and has been recently launched. Burlington and Grand Offender Resource Navigators will work with the TRTC to assist clients in accessing a menu of transition services.

The TRTC will make client referrals to a local NPD (Neighborhood Partnership), which will offer mentoring to returning offenders. The TRTC will assist the Winooski Community Justice Center in information exchange with the Winooski Police Department.

For further information, please access the position description at winooskijc.com



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Name Game 2010

What's in a name? For some people, the perfect profession or proclivity

BY KEN PICARD

Do we choose our professions, or do they choose us? For some people, the answer may depend upon the name they were given at birth. Who among us hasn't come across the hobbyist, tradesman or professional whose name is a perfect match for his or her profession or avocation?

For the fourth year in a row, I've compiled an annual list of these so-called "aptonyms," with help from my fellow *Seven Days* wondrous and astute readers. I don't search for these names, though other such lists abound on the Internet, but simply write them down when I or my colleagues chance upon them. What's amusing, each year, is how commonplace aptonyms are — so much so that

we often don't notice them until we see them on this list.

For example, anyone old enough to remember Ronald Reagan's presidency may recall the name of one of his press secretaries, Larry Speakes. More recently, President George W. Bush's secretary of education was named Margaret Spellings.

Closer to home, the director of communications at the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing is named Eric Hunsucker. In fact, previous years' lists have turned up an abundance of aptonyms in state government, including many who work for the Department of Fish & Wildlife, among them wildlife biologists Forrest Blumstein and John Baek, and former chief game warden Robert Rios.

Earlier lists included place-name aptonyms, such as the \$252.1 million winning Powerball ticket that was purchased in the town of Winooski, & D. They've also included anti-aptonyms, such as Dr. James Clapp, a Vermont OB/GYN. "This year, I came across three almost-aptonyms, which I call 'close but no cigar.' Enjoy!"



Lisa Angstrom / Wiliston psychologist

Adrian Brown / owner of Adams Nurseries

Katherine Bloomer / New York City at large

Max Baer / senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations who wrote a history of guem to warfare and terrorism

Chris Brey / former Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor and horse farm owner (technically horses don't "brey" but donkeys do)

Lyle Buttery / Vermont wine milk advocate

Mark Drakewater / European Space Agency expert on polar glacier melt

Don Eftom / "Cooking at Home" host for TV news channel NPT

Margaret Fowle / director of Vermont's Peregrine Falcon Recovery Project

Michael Hunter / A Manchester, N.H., man who bought a weapon at a gun show then accidentally shot himself in the leg

Edward Johnson / chronic public masturbator from Rome

Suzanne Lewis / food and nutrition specialist with the University of Vermont Extension

Gerard J. Pettit ("Pet it") / Jr. Bristol man caught by Wiliston police earlier this year masturbating inside a parked vehicle

Melody Puller / Vermont punist

Sir George Mansfield Smith-Cooking / first director of British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) who urged his agents to use semen as invisible ink

Brenda Snow / director of human resources / Turtle Run winter apper

Karl Wells / British Petroleum (BP) vice president and spokesperson on the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster

CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR:

Dr. John Fortunes / surgeon at Fletcher Allen Health Care (I'm pretty he performed super-expensive plastic surgeries)

Dr. Ned Hyman / Burlington colon and rectal surgeon (winning hole)

Dr. Mark Plante / urologist (great aptonym if he treated cancers instead of humans)

Got your own aptonym? Contact Ken Picard at kenn@kenpicard.com



The Writer at the Table

Local literati in their café habitats

BY ROBERT HICKAT

Many an undergrad who plugs her laptop on a café table likes to imagine she's a famous writer hunched behind a Malabar, nursing a drink all day and night. It's an image we Americans got from reading expat writers Ernest Hemingway or F. Scott Fitzgerald, who immortalized the cafés of 1920s Montparnasse in Paris.

But the phenomenon is global. Cafés nurtured Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño, whose novels *Amulet* and *The Savage Detectives* document the poetry scene of Café La Habana and its neighbors in 1970s Mexico City. Café culture shaped a literary scene in post-Soviet cities such as Prague and Budapest in the 1990s.

The tradition of writing in public is alive and well in 21st-century Vermont, a state that has perhaps more than its fair share of scribbles per capita. One scene of its tiny towns here: establishments that seem made for writing. A sign with the words "espresso" and "Wi-Fi" is the universal marker of such places, be they bookstores, galleries or coffee shops.

To discriminate among the best spots to write, research or just commune with one's muse in public, *Seven Days* asked a few of those who know the writers themselves. Whether you need to write poems, check email or just sit down out of the winter blues for a few hours, consider dropping by one of these writer-endorsed watering holes.

Puch, be encouraged. You may not get any writing done. Emails, however, so well. You might just find yourself seized by the café spirit—laptop and little forgotten—scribbling a sonnet on your napkin.



MACKLIN FINLEY

The author of the poetry collection *Street Rat* (University of Detroit Mercy Press, 2000) has written his first novel, *The Mart*, published in 2009 by Burlington's Mineral Press.

Montpelier, Burlington

The atmosphere here is relaxed and quiet. When the husband and wife own the place are baking, the windows stare up. The music is good, never loud enough to intrude on the creative process. I occasionally run into other writers there, but the vibe is never "see

me and be seen." This is a neighborhood hotspot for 104 North Enders good coffee and food, carpenteries, home-made bread. Most weeks I spend at least one day on my laptop here, working on poems and plays, and though these sessions can stretch for hours, I've always made to feel welcome. When school lets out, a throng of kids comes in for sweet, adding to the café's quiet charm.

KARIN GOTTSNALL

The Middlebury-based author of *Cross* (Randomeer University Press, 2005) has a chapbook, *Flood Letters*, forthcoming

from Argo Apple. (Disclosure: Gottsnall taught a workshop I attended at Middlebury.) For the most part, the poetry-loving good says she's "unable to write in cafés."

Vergennes Laundry, Vergennes

Tenry writers face working in the coffee shops of Addison County who speak of the freedom from distractions that cafés provide. Unfortunately, I've always found the proximity of pain or chocolate pretty distracting.

But now there is Vergennes Laundry, the new wood-fired bakery, cheese shop and espresso bar on Main Street in Vergennes. Owner-chef Suzanne Jones designed the space to honor its previous life as a laundromat, with creamy white and blood-wood surfaces and clean lines I spent an afternoon there meticulously shuffling pages of my manuscript and sampling galettes, hand-dipped biscuits and artistic espresso drinks (my latte was topped with a delicate foam heart). It was warm inside, despite the day's raininess, and the place resembled my idea of heaven. The tables are big and sturdy, just as a chandelier is plentiful, and the coffee is hot and fresh and served in bowls.

I may never be able to write there, but Vergennes Laundry offers something I find even more useful: inspiration in the form of an artistic sensibility and appreciation for small luxuries—precise, motivating comfort that—like good poems—are never cheaply sweet.

ROBERT COHEN

A Middlebury College professor of English and American literature and a bestselling novelist, Cohen's latest is *American Restaurant* (Scribner, 2009).

THE WRITER AT THE TABLE BY PH

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SIDEdishes

BY ALICE LEVITT

Tapping New Talent

A FAMILIAR FACE JOINS THREE PENNY INNOCENTS

After **MATTHEW BLODGETT** cooked his last meal at Montpelier's **BLACK DOOR** last November in his New Year's Eve, fans of his fire won't have to go far for a taste. While new Black Door owners **MICHAEL** and **LORNA BLUM** (best known for their roots **MICHAEL'S ON THE HILL**)

Already a regular at his new employer's, Blodgett says he hopes to contribute in his new role as the chef and research that goes into Three Penny's beer selections. The emphasis will be on local ingredients, and Blodgett anticipates offering "a lot of preserved meats, including meats—especially charcuterie."

Three Penny looks its own kitchen, but Blodgett

Healthy Business

KIMBLET BEGINS IN HUNTERTON

Deep-fried pickled pigs' ears may not sound vegan, but at **KIMBLET** in Montpelier, they can be—sort of. When the aerie, top oak nestled from Burn Street to State Street on November 26, it didn't put quite a bigger space. Kimblet now serves don't just organic **CERTIFIED ORGANIC**, and all full menu can be prepared in regular, vegan or gluten-free versions.

With the larger storage space of the downtown

and home-made writings. Donors are already sampling the aforementioned meat at the evening meal, where Madusa offers "Breakfast for Dinner" options. Other evening meal choices include chicken fried rabbit, smoked lamb and perhaps Vermont's only offering of *Salvadoran* pupusas. And, yes, with the help of a range of marinated tofu and tempeh, vegan diners can enjoy any of the above.

Dinner service has given Madusa the opportunity to expand Kimblet's already offerings as well. She'll share some from New Year's Eve cocktail specials made from sustainably or locally made liquors with seasonal garnishes. A range of local, organic and local organic wines will be available for the New Year's toast and every night thereafter.

Parlor Trick

THE FASHIONABLE TAP'S DRILL GETS A LOUNGE

Back in the 1970s, the owner of the McDonald's franchise on Bank Street in Burlington planned to turn the building's basement into a play place.

The last-friendly pangle gym and ball pit never came to fruition, and the basement remained storage space. But this New Year's Eve, that lower room will finally see some reimagining. **JAN CARROLL**, co-owner of the **FAIR HARBOR TAP & GRILL**—which replaced McDonald's—has transformed it into his restaurant's new lounge.

Like an old-time speakeasy, the addition is indicated only by a carved wooden door into the entry's entrance. When guests venture downstairs to what Doris has been already calling "the Parlor" and "the Rectory," they'll be surrounded by antique wood. The strings come from a Vermont barn and a Northeast Vermont church, reclaimed by The Architectural Salvage Warehouse in Essex, the main off-late-culture bar



MATTHEW BLODGETT, CYNTHIA MADUSA, JEFF NEELY

Waterbury) are testing their wings with soft openings starting January 11. Blodgett will be preparing for his own entrance down the street at **THREE PENNY INNOCENTS**.

"I'm very excited," says Blodgett of his planned first day, January 13. Though the chef enjoyed preparing his mince dumplings and signature burger at the Black Door, he says the format of Three Penny suits him better. There, he will change the entire menu daily to make use of products at their freshest. "It's really along the lines of cooking from the heart," he says.

says he's not worried. For sure, he'll have access to the kitchen at **THE TWO TICS** in Waterbury, which shares Three Penny's owners. According to co-owner **SHARR KENNEDY**, Blodgett and Mad Two chef **JEREMY** will collaborate on a number of projects, including Three Penny's Friday two nights.

Another of Kimblet's plans: adding lunch to Three Penny's menu over current chef **JACOBSON**. Lunch and Blodgett starts. Look for meat pies and sandwiches to go with the afternoon snack.

location—generously occupied by Restaurant **PHOENIX**—Madusa has been serving three meals a day for the past month, including weekly expanded options at breakfast and lunch. Tarrant at supper here has been so good that, last Sunday, "We sold out of pretty much everything," says Madusa.

Still, the restaurant considers this her soft opening. The re-fabbed Kimblet will celebrate its official grand opening on New Year's Day with the premiere of a new branch menu.

Expect to see savory strata, a variety of soulettes

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The Writer at the Table

Carell's Hungry Mind Cafe, Middlebury

On those occasions when the long distance slog of the writer's life makes me feel sorry and indignant—that is, pretty much every day—I like to go out to a cafe and feel sorry and indignant there. As my town has said, let's see, was coffee okay, I know it well and appreciate it fiercely. So let me say it tonight: Carell's Hungry Mind is my home away from home, a place with good light, strong coffee, and a social space devoted to the oeuvre of Richard Thompson. The only downside is the distracting presence of all the other sorry and indignant writers in town. Who knew there were so many?

If the economy were better, we'd each have our own café. But then we'd miss the most attractive thing about the place: the presence, at any given moment, of half a dozen people staring intently at their laptops, hoping TMI at dawn and, in contemplating about how badly my own work is going, succeed in distracting them from how badly their work is going. And then, after a while, you look up and it's time for lunch.

PAIGE ACKERSON-KIEY

The poet published in *No One's Land* in 2005 (*Albino Press*) and has a volume of poems entitled *My Love Is a Dead Arctic Reptile* forthcoming from the same publisher.

Bristol Bakery

A Cafe

Everyone needs the gaze of strangers once in a while. Participating in poetry writing, a solitary pursuit where many hands help behind a few discreet lines, the knowledge that you have been seen—shuffling papers, moving your pen back and forth—brings a sense of accountability, of productivity, which are hard to get from the actual content of work at the end of each day. When I took such women, I heard to Bristol Bakery I love the refuge it provides during weekly trips to the laundromat. It's warm, clean, anonymous. I like the water boat paddles under the

tables. I like that I can stare at a pot of tea without feeling I've overstayed my welcome. And if I need help emerging from stagnant seclusion, I can take a look around and make eye contact with a friend.

TINA ESCALIA

The University of Vermont Spanish professor and *scholarship writer* is the author of the poetry collection *Older Days* (Bar Cook).

The Black Gallery, Winooski

I am visiting from nostalgia. Nostalgia for those days with more time for coffee and the newspaper on a warmest sofa, for some poems stitched with the aroma of a latte. I finally had time to revisit The Black Gallery. The

windrow reveals the vague movement of the traffic dressed in a layer of snow. Inside, time remains intact, while a copper mug floats in water, circling shapes that remind me of Africa, moon, red tea. But it is not the curious seep staring from the dammed side, the Nazareth forbidden side.

floating densely in red dunes within my cup that distress me, but the heat that circles patterns and displays of local art the owner's dog, dressed as a horse with a sunset blanket.

Or is it a home disguised as a painter? "It keeps her warm," explains the owner—I pour milk in my tea and break the spell. Time inevitably returns, while I go back to my newspaper.

GREG OELANDY

The Ireland-born artist in residence at St. Michael's College has numerous collections of poems, most recently *The Ship of North* (J&J Press, 2007) and *The New Cities Army* (Combat Paper Press, 2010). Delany co-edited the recent anthology *The Word Exchange: Anglo-Born Poets in Translation* (WW Norton, 2010) and was just named the

THE TRADITION
OF WRITING IN
PUBLIC IS ALIVE
AND WELL
IN 21ST-CENTURY
VERMONT.



SIDEdishes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

was most recently seen at 38 Main Street Pub in Windsor.

Church pots will serve as luauquets starting and add to the communal mood

of these sipping local beer or snacking on chef **Wendy** owner's small plates. Those dishes will include all the same Vermont cheese plates,



Jim Daniels

house-made charcuterie and other bar delicacies served upstairs, with the exception of flings and dimers. "This was a big win for a great little [communitarian] worker," Clayton jokes.

While giving a tour of the well-used space, Davis predicts that, once complete, the room, with its 9-foot-tall ceilings, will have a "dark, cozy, lounge feel." He proudly points out the hidden alcove that will

house a barbeque, complete with an antique, dark wood counter for players to watch their brews.

The lounge will be open every day from 4:00 p.m. until the restaurant's closing. Davis says it will serve as a cold-weather alternative to Farnsworth's popular beer garden.

A PlayPlace for grownups, indeed.

Lost in Space

BURLINGTON CAFE TO CLOSE
After five years of filling the bellies of Flynn Avenue workers, Burlington's **Cafe** will close on December 30. The change isn't for lack of business, says owner **Mike**, who, to cover with his sister, Lisa, "It's just that we're

kind of ready to move on," she adds with a sigh.

As Lisa plans to return to her first career in civil engineering and says that Lisa will probably go back to accounting. But what will happen to the space, which shares a building with the PlayPlace art gallery? Lisa says the building owners are eager to retain an eatery, as is she. "We've had people coming in and looking at everything we have, but we haven't had any offers yet," she says.

With a return to the 9-to-5 grind in sight, Lisa is already negotiating for her routine at Outer Space. "I'm going to start making soup every day," she says. "That's the most fun, creative part of any day." ☐

Follow Alice on Twitter for the latest food news! **Alice Lovett** @alovel

president of the Association of Literary Scholars, Critics and Writers.

The Daily Planet, Leaning's Bistre, Muddy Waters, Burlington

I must be considered one of the most unreasonable of patrons (I apologize for my scowl) here and now to the very other patrons past, present and future who risked or will risk sticking up a conversation with me.) For nearly a quarter of a century I have frequented The Daily Planet, Leaning's and Muddy Waters. As the owners, writers, and bar women and men know, I have a favorite seat in each establishment where the daughters of Macanoy are most comfortable around — seats that my molecules are part of by now.

So, the bar stool by the mirror at the end of the bar in The Daily Planet, the seat nearest the wait loungers at the bar in Leaning's, and the inconspicuous pew behind the bookshelves in Muddy Waters are each mine. If you happen to be seated in one of these spots and see a chap with gray hair and a Pin board jacket, it's you, truly. Just to make the seat immediately or the voice Muddy will persuade the Furies to descend upon you. ☐

WHERE AND WHEN

Norway

100 North Champlain Street
(South End) Burlington
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240 Main Street, W. Vermont
Hours: 7 a.m.-11 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday
by choice
Vt. F. No
Free coffee/espresso bar pastries, cheese
small plates, desserts
www.vpsmt.vermont.com

Carle's Hungry Mind Cafe

304 Main Street, Burlington
Hours: 7 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday-Friday
9 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday
kitchen bakery
Vt. F. No
Free coffee/espresso bar beer and wine
pastries, lunch
www.carleshungrymindcafe.com

Bristol Bakery & Cafe

16 No. Street, Bristol
Hours: 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday
7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday
Vt. F. No
Free coffee/espresso bar beer and wine
breakfast, lunch bakery
www.bristolbakery.com

The Black Bakery

1 East Allen Street, Windsor
Hours: 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Thursday
9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday
10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday
Vt. F. No
Free coffee/espresso bar pastries
www.theblackbakeryvt.com

The Daily Planet

10 Center Street, Burlington
Hours: 4 p.m.-2 a.m. daily
Vt. F. No
Free coffee/espresso bar full bar full
restaurant and pub menu
www.dailyplanetvt.com

Leaning's Bistre

70 Church Street, Burlington
Hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday
9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday 9 a.m.-11 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday
Vt. F. No
Free coffee/espresso bar full bar
restaurant menu
www.leaningsbistre.com

Muddy Waters

304 Main Street, Burlington
Hours: 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday 10:30 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday 10:30 a.m.-midnight
Sunday 10:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday
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Fat Chance



A prominent Vermonter shares his love -- and hate -- for food in a new book

BY ALICE LEVITT

In 1962, Bill Schubart was fast approaching 500 pounds. He knew that if he were laid-back -- or worse -- by his belt, he couldn't run his new media manufacturing and distribution company Revolution. So he stopped his way past the airport's sundries selling peanuts and cinnamon beans and booked a plane to an addiction treatment center in Florida.

The place was "really a dump," as Schubart now describes it from the safety of his Haverhill home. Nonetheless, by the time he left that dump, he was down to nearly 250 pounds, his weight when he entered Phillips Exeter Academy at age 18.

Tarleton Jung, Schubart was asked back to deliver an inspirational speech at the facility. "I looked at this sea of really huge people, some in wheelchairs, a couple on gurneys," he says. "I was so overwhelmed emotionally, I never even looked at my notes."

A version of the ensuing address appears in Schubart's post-published book, *Fat People*. ("In Treatment," one of the collection of 14 short stories, features a scene in which obese patients at a five-rodden Florida treatment center are treated to tears by a speaker who echoes Schubart's words to the crowd: "I just want to let you know that you're all OK. It's not tragic to胖.") This is the message of *Fat People*. In Schubart's stories, we meet a vividly realized cast of characters who all fight a battle with the scale. Some emerge relatively unscathed. Many don't emerge at all.

Vermonters may know Schubart as a Vermont Public Radio commentator, a presence on the boards of numerous nonprofits, and a host and typewriter. Last March, in a spread for this paper called "Rabbit's Kitchen," Suzanne Rodolakis took readers on a tour of the impressive food-prep space Schubart shares with his wife, Kate -- which spans two indoor kitchens and a pair of outdoor fire pits.

Schubart loves food, and he doesn't hide it. But in *Fat People*, which he self-published through his company Magic 1986, he explores the dark side of that passion.

Rather than happy goists,



Bill Schubart

Schubart's characters tend to be secretive huge eaters. One boards saline crackers under her bed, another wolfed down sandwiches in the car on his way home from work as his wife naps too.

Schubart's own relationship with food is a more ambivalent one. He and Kate, a reporter for *WHDH* coverage, travel the state in search of new tastes. He expands excitedly on spiced pork he had in India, and lamb roasts and fava beans with arugula that he bought from a street vendor on a recent trip to Morocco.

Back home, the Schubarts are famous for the dinner parties they host about 15 times a year. Kate, who grew up partly in France, takes the baking and the vegetable and pasta dishes in the conventional kitchen adjacent to the living room. Down a short flight of stairs is Schubart's kitchen, which he calls the "intimate kitchen." There he prepares his own entrees, or most he buys from local farms and often batters himself. The day woodstove can cook to a heat of 900 degrees, Kate pops her roasted potatoes

and broccoli in it for a supremely crisp finish.

Every spring, the Schubarts invite a large group of relatives -- including both of Bill's ex-wives -- to feast on the meat that has piled up in their freezer over the past year. The couple calls it their "Rabbit the Pioneer Smother," as Audie, "gathering of the tribes," according to Schubart. "There are 30 to 40 pounds of poultry, rabbit, lamb, beef and fish," says Schubart. "I have to build three different fires to cook everything in the freezer, and the platters keep coming."

How does the author handle his weight issues around all that food? Now 65 and about 250 pounds, at a height that makes him look more inconspicuous than meaty, Schubart says he is no longer looking for a quick fix. "My doctor is just very good and sensitive," he says. Her advice is for him to lose 10 percent of his body weight, rather than shoot for 100 pounds.

To do this, Schubart follows an addiction model -- but, since alcohol and nicotine treatment involves going cold turkey, that's easier said than done. Instead of skipping meals, Schubart goes through hours in which he eats out wheat and sugar. Aside from their heathiness, he considers highly refined carbohydrates his drug of choice. "I think everyone has a different biochemistry of addiction," he says. "For some people it's alcohol, for some people it's heroin, for some people it's fat." Following an Alcoholics Anonymous-style prescription, Schubart lost 45 pounds last summer. Since he discontinued the diet, he has lost about 10 pounds.

Though Schubart and his wife, a childhood friend with whom he reconnected in 1985, share their intense passion for food, Kate still wears the dress she sported in college. In Schubart's view, that's a result of her different neurochemistry. "Kate has a wonderful insulin-slow-food gene. You just have to enjoy food the way you enjoy it," he says. "There are times that you don't worry about what's in the cafeteria lunch or casserole." His brain works differently, as his corny gift reveals. "The addictive piece is always lingering beneath that," he says emphatically.

While Schubart believes sweating is part of his nature, he says it was also

reared by his childhood relationship with his mother, whose diet from caring parent to bedridden consumptive eater. He fondly shares in his story "Life Lets His Mother Down" "She used to eat in bed just endlessly," he says now. The memories on the mental loop lamp his mother kept by her bed — and used to heat soup when her children were not available to bring her food from the kitchen.

Schubert says there's at least a germ of real experience in each of his stories: "Father Bob at the Beach" the tale of a 700-pound priest who dies after a last attempt to lose weight at a food addiction center, is based on a real-life acquaintance. The book's deceptively breezy opener is based on Schubert's encounter with a heavily overweight woman on a train ride to New York City.

Schubert admits he has painted his own experiences with obesity onto the book's pages. At first, he didn't intend to publish his memoirs on deeply personal struggles. But he found himself "writing 'a couple of stories' that turned into enough for a collection. Within a year, Schubert had a follow-up to his successful *The Lardless Stories*, which White River Press put out in 2008.

After he decided he had a book in the making, Schubert traveled to Spain, where he encountered the image that would become *Fat People's* striking cover: "La manzana desnuda" was painted in 1666, the morbidly overweight young girl who posed for Juan Carucho de Miranda stores back painted and colorized, as if she knew she will be immortalized as a "flesh monument." To Schubert's surprise, the Prado Museum changed him only to cause to use the image for *Fat People*.

Schubert can relate to the apparent horror of "La manzana." His story "Cliff at Dinner" is a veiled version of his own coming-of-age at Easter. There, Schubert was among the thousands of incoming students at Ivy League and Boston state colleges and film prep schools from the 1940s to '70s who were forced to pose for made "positive photos" as part of a eugenics study. In the story, Schubert describes how his proxy "paralyzed by fear" at exposing his unetched left to his fellow students. Unlike Schubert, Cliff eventually drops the weight, with a little help from his hands.

Despite the hopeless ones he describes in *Fat People*, Schubert is far from despondent about his gift. He laughs as he remembers the comedian he

met when visiting Chas. More times than he can remember, he says, he noticed a couple looking at him and making each other. This led to an approach, which almost always ended with the wife photographing the husband beside Schubert, whose gift appeared to move as not a member but a mascot.

Schubert considers himself lucky to carry his weight well. He puts heavy people in two categories: those like his character Art Plouffe in "A Man of Appetite," a dairy farmer whose gift is distributed over his tall body like a healthy and "people whose weight hangs on them like a cloud." Among the latter is the title character in "Carla Loses

Weight," whose signs of fat prompts her husband to leave her with the words that "I'd need a two-foot dick to even get inside her now."

Unlike Art Plouffe, whose condition ends up mired, Schubert says he is in good health. At 65, he can still log his Illinois property for "a lot of hours of a clip with a chainsaw." His hobbies, Nippon-style transatlantic travel, are now his "good" hangout. "I could eat that till hell from over," he says.

He adds that he hasn't set foot in McDonald's since his children were small and keeps his visits to fast-food restaurants, such as Blackboard Tavern and The Kitchen Table Bistro, to a minimum. His favorite snack is no longer cheese and crackers but a fresh wedge of cabbage.

While Schubert worked on *Fat People*, he says, Kate asked her heavy but active husband, "Why don't you write a story about how you can live well, be healthy and be fat?"

"I said, 'Well of that can be true, but as is everything else that I write,'" he counts Schubert.

He's grown frustrated, he says, with the scores of books devoted to food, dieting and the science of obesity. Schubert wanted to write about what it's like to be a fat person — not, as he sees it, things one does not want. "It's not intended to be a prescriptive book," he says with a shrug.

Because of that, the author says, finding ways to market *Fat People* hasn't been easy. "This is one of those books you're not going to give as a Christmas present," he jokes.

"We'll see — do you buy it in the dark of night and slip it under someone's door?"

Fat People (Corgi, Schubert's first book, \$24.99) is \$2. Available at www.fatpeople.com and local bookstores.



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DEC. 22-24, 26-29 | **OUTDOORS**

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SLEIGH RIDES

Wednesday, December 22
through Friday, December 24, and Saturday, December 26, through Wednesday, December 29, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Shelburne Farms
View website for future dates through the end of winter. \$6.95 fee for kids under 12. Info: 802-801-2 www.shelburnefarms.org



PHOTO BY JEFFREY BLUMBERG



PHOTO BY JEFFREY BLUMBERG

DEC. 28 | **FILM** Reel Time

Lower the lights and pop the corn? A cinema scene is cropping up in the heart of the Mad River Valley. Westfield's Tuesday Night at the Movies draws sizeable crowds to the Big Picture Theater & Cafe every fourth Tuesday of the month. Organized by the local Rotary club, the big-screen bash runs a selection of classic, indie, sleeper and festival-flicks. Sure, you could get most of them on Netflix, but "it's become a great forum for people coming together," enthuses Big Picture co-owner Claudio Becker. The series that drew to 50 filmgosers showed up for September's screening of *Chinatown*, and roughly 40 arrived the following month for *The 400 Blows*. December's pick is the 1996 comedy *Yankee*, starring Peter Onorati as a no aging actor who finds himself entangled in a friends' prize race. Come early for drinks, and stay late for informal discussion.

TUESDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Tuesday, December 28, 7 p.m. at Big Picture Theater & Cafe
in Westfield. \$6 or \$30 for an month membership. Info:
802-888-1111, westfieldmovie.com, www.bigpicturetheater.info

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meditation

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PEACE: Jan. 15 7-9 p.m. Cost: \$15/seat or \$10/plate. Jan. 16 \$20 at door. Optional evening. Call Dile 6-1730 p.m. \$25 Location: Shade Tree & Space 38 Main St. Springfield, Ill. Email: Rod Kase 2447 mchiro@earthlink.net. A participatory group form of meditation in which members, a Japanese way to focus the spiritual energies within ourselves and others. Led by Rodolfo Torres and Bruce who have led these classes worldwide for the past 25 years.

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for in ganshaandlectr.org. Through the practice of sitting still and listening, your heart will gain out and discover you are connecting with your heart. By simply letting yourself be as you are you develop genuine sympathy toward yourself. The Sri Bhagwan Shreebhada Center

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Location: Windward Coast Nags and The Naggs, 3884 Glen St., Suite 226, 6 Thuringba
Info: 0800 826 8108/0408 19702.
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FOUNDATIONS OF A THERAPEUTIC YOGA SESSION Fri., June 21 at 8:30 p.m. Sat., June 22 at 9 a.m. Both sessions are free. For more information, call 423-878-0000. Local link: Vermont Center for Yoga and Therapy, 36 Danvers St., Suite 204, South Burlington, VT 05493. www.vcyt.com This is an experiential and didactic training for yoga teachers interested in working privately with vulnerable clients in effort to create a therapeutic yoga session. Career is exploring the foundations of a teaching session as well as the application of ashtanga yoga in the classroom. Weblog: Sweet-Sensory, Reactions and Truths Blog.

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306:1367-1374 by J. A. Asch
Feb 3, 2014. DOI: 10.1001/jama.2013.281119
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PAG. CNT

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RECONNECTING & REPLENISHING Join us 10-4:30-5:45pm. We'll be on the East 84th Ave. Location: Vermont Center for Yoga and Therapy 22 Quaker St. Suite 204 St. Paulington, MN 55126
FREE visit: Come & spend some time doing something about work, life, plans, and your relationships. It's hard to take care of self? This workshop will give you a chance to challenge a problem and find your position, strength, and voice. We'll be using the principles of yoga, breathing, and meditation. **Free** by Penny Silver ☺



Naughty and Nice

Holiday hopes from Vermont's music scene

BY DAN BOLLES

Every year around the holidays, seven days a day, in with some of the artists, booking agents, label managers, and other movers and shakers who make up the local music scene to find out what they'd like to see in their Christmas stockings. With only a few shopping days left, here's what they said...

DJ Fatzies 8

I, for my desire to buy me the recently released 36-DVD set of every episode of "The MTV Raps" for real. 2. For someone to beat me "Kids Don't Wanna Hear" CD so I would be unable to ever play it again at 90s night. 3. For the chance to show a bottle of whiskey and a game with Jiggs, Jesus Brown, Marvin Gaye and Rick James.

Kelly Haven, Weylin Speed
One of Green (Lia's) Ties, and for the Drive-By Truckers to come to IIG. It is that much to ask!

Big Heavy World 105.9 FM WOMAN UP the Radiator

Big Heavy World and the Radiator would have asked for a box of happiness, but it turned out the office is one. We would have asked for quality music in studio equipment, but Santa's push-on reel chose... and Vermont businesses and friends... to show down early and set up as before Christmas came. Our last wish was that everyone know how good a time it is to work at Big Heavy and the Radiator, surrounded by Vermont's music and Burlington's creative, most artistic, giving and thoughtful volunteers. Let's find that under the tree!

Rebecca Kopycinski, Nutsa Wertz

I wish this year that Dan Bolles would come out to mine above! (Editor's note: So does Dan Bolles.)

Karen Krnjacic, Folkie Association

A telepresence device! Who put all these places so far apart?

Jay Blanchard, Marc Pyramit Records
Vermont's experimental music scene is

more diverse and prolific than at any time in its history. I hope that in 2011, the state, the nation, and the world continue to further appreciate the great music-making scene coming out of our wonderful little state!

Zack duPont, Stacked, Japhy Ryder

I would like for the Flynn Center to pair local support acts with national acts. This town has so much to offer its musicians, but it's tough to really connect with a crowd in many bars or to fully appreciate music as a listener in that setting. The Flynn is one of the only venues in town where music is sought out in the traditional art form. So let's nurture our local artists who deserve a shot at connecting with larger crowds in Burlington. Support local music!

Ralph Wierckx, the Detonators, the Haze, the Haze

A publicly funded revolving stage, lit and by those musicians as writer and surrounded by a circular audience area in center, should be installed in City Hall Park.

Josh Brooks, GrandKick

My old Chase Fun "Give us your money... Sucker!" T-shirt, which I would mass-produce and send out to all the good folks in Washington, DC, reverting the tax code.

Brad Barnett, DJ Huxtable, Junior WFLW

To host local punk, ska, hardcore and indie open mic/balloon on my show, and help promote more local acts using my show as a tool for the local music community.

Aya Inoue, the Amida-bouken Project

Dear Santa, You know that old building that used to be 80-90-70's in Burlington? The big, empty building downtown? The historic one near the river? I want that building to be a show locality where everyone is required to wear bathrobes, including the local bands that play there every night. White Russian optional bathrobe, mandatory! It's a simple request, Santa. New music happens.

Brian Murphy, former blogger, false 45th
A rebirth of "Mardi Gras": Lamb: Abbey (Editor's note: Our wish? That Brian Murphy ditch the "Mardi" from his title.)

Sermon Chapen, Lumbiercha

An online cultural shift toward appreciating our diverse culture — like slow food. A progressive, DA-conscious, hip-hop/contemporary global-music streaming online series looked at the Plymouth, seven days increasing its first spot, for music. More several people like Rachel Blackett, VPR, realizing that it could be the next KCRW or KUTV, and that's Burlington's destiny.

Matt Vachon, the Huxtable

My holiday wish, as it always is, would be for more local music venues to feature original music, that playing in a cover band these past few years has taught me that most people just want to hear the same old songs, great songs though they may be. That come on! How many times can you listen to "Sweet Slow Believing"?

Ben Maddux, Tams

I hope that all the people working on albums this winter will be able to crank down and kick out the jams. You'll be dead soon! Get to work.

Andrew Parker-Renga, singer/songwriter

I wish for Larkins Moore of the Dave Matthews Band to be brought back to life! I wish for Vermont folk instruments to come back. And I wish for one of my single friends to ask out the hot blond girl who works at Mr. Mike's. If you're ever parked in Burlington, you know who I am talking about.

Peg Tacey

I sincerely wish John Lennon were alive and making music. I wish the Hollywood Indians were still playing at Bender. I wish my TV would break — but not, I wish there was a reality show about the Burlington music scene. (Watch me: "Suck Daddy's Aluka"?) I wish Jack would produce and play on any new albums. I wish the whole world could hear my boyfriend.

Bridge (Duffy-Dennis), play on it! I wish people would drive on the snow when I say I like Freddy (Duffy-Dennis). It makes me happy. I wish I had a mini-culture in seven days. I'd call it "Hot Music Sucks, But I Love the Huxtable Who Make It and Really Appreciate That They Do."

Bobby Mackinnon Jr., Rough Francis

1. A leader PM system at the Monkey House. 2. Bruce Maas (Urban Jones & the Pop Kings) to produce the new Rough Francis album. 3. The Pigeon release show at 242 Main. 4. One journey and one pair tree.

Rex Wilkerson, City Blends

This year, nothing under the tree would make me happier than a new playlist: guitar and co-lead singer all at the same time, for more than two minutes at a time. And to have that CD I was stoned last year to really be finally finished. And for Grace Potter to meet me on the corner of King and Battery to take it out. Flunk that "Oak is in" right where the war was still alive.

Cheryl Wilkerson, director of programming, WPR Classical and host of World of Music 105.9 FM the Radiator

I want Anita Mitter's Hushes to get the packaging/design Grammy it's deserved for, and the new year to hold many more local recordings in line at Michelle Chomsky's La Vieilles.

Creston Lee, guitar enthusiast

Five more parking spots outside the Monkey House, 10 more hours in the day and one bag of Posties release show.

Eric Olsen, Iwale, Kinnikuttan, James Kuchela, Supervisor, SAP

1. More time. 2. An agreement that we'll all slow down or yellow light rather than speed up. 3. A whole full-length CD. 4. Better listening parties with my wife and daughter. 5. More hours full-length CD. 4. An agreement that we'll all rest our souls from Waterbury and buy our music at Pure Pop. 3. More time. (5)

SOUND*bites*

SEP DAVE BOLLE

All I Want for Christmas

It's kind of a light week on the local music fringe, as this year Jesus' birthday falls on a Saturday, effectively killing an entire weekend normally reserved for rocking and/or rolling. That's not to say there aren't still plenty of options left before and after Christmas to say whatever entertainment dollars you have left after the annual gift buyout. And we'll get to those shortly. Still, with most joints shuttered up Friday and Saturday, the calendar is a short loss.

So, before we delve into the pressing matters of the day, and in the spirit of the season, I'd like to take a minute to offer some suggestions to anyone searching for last-minute gift items for their local music scene. One, I'm told I'm really difficult to shop for. And two, after completing the holiday wishes of various members of our local music scene (see page 58), my grand prizes are a-flutter. So here goes.

Then, yes, I would like to see every band in Vermont have at least one good, visually interesting, high-resolution press photo taken. They don't have to be professionally done or anything. Just of high enough quality to use in print. It's 2010, people. You can take high-res pics with any digital camera. There is no excuse not to have a good picture handy. And if you do, you stand a much better chance of one day scoring photo-sitting — or scoring — on these pages. (By the way, "visually interesting" pretty much means not a picture of some band member's back.)

well. Or on train tracks. It's been done.)

And another thing: Should you ever tour that great land of ours and seek publicity in other newspapers, having print-quality pics accessible to my music-crit colleagues in other cities is a good way to get your foot in the door.

actual time from an actual PR blurb describing an actual band actually playing in town next month. "With the coolness of *Waco*, the songwriting depth of *Secret Smear*, the pop accessibility of *Reservoir*..." And so on.

Seriously? If any of that were true, these guys would be the greatest band in the history of rock, period. They're not, of course. And no one is his or her right

called **sevens** and they'll be at Higher Ground on Sunday, August 9th.

I would also like the long-awaited "new" album from **SWALA** to my stocking. The one we've been waiting on for, like, nine years. Amanda, Eric and Jeremy, I love you. I really, really do. But this is getting silly.

A few other albums I'd like to see under the tree: the new **BONA VENTURA**, the fantastic new EP from **MARVIN SMITH**, the soon-to-be-released "new" **GRACE** record, the country album **SUSANNE RATH** was doing with **BENNY MURDER**, a new **MELINDA AREA** album, anything at all from **LOREEN**, and **BLAKE BUTTER**'s debut.

I would also like ANNA FRANKLIN to move back to Vermont, and for the same reason: STEVE TREMPER and BERNARD HORTON have not to leave.

I would like M5R, Pressnet and Anaglyphasy Media to join forces and open their own club in the town to be vacant Old Navy storefront on Church Street. And for said club to also have a bonfire after.

I would like to see **THE JAYS** **STAYDOWN** live. Not necessarily in Vermont, though that would be ideal. Along with **THE HARTS**, **ALVIN KOSTELLE** and **ROCKWELL**, he's one of the only artists left on my rock-and-roll bucket list.

I would like to find a
red-headed drummer.
And finally, I would like
to wish everyone a happy,
safe and love-filled holiday
season. Oh, and I'd also like
a raise. And world peace.

BiteTorrent

As I've mentioned in past years, I have a few local-musica-related holiday traditions. The first is that I don't Christmas until I've heard "Blue Christmas" performed by Bret Hughes and his gang of holiday belshazzers. Hughes' annual ho-ho-ho-ho-doo has changed verses a few times over the years, moving from



While we're on the subject of band promotion, I would also like to see more artists describe themselves honestly. If I read one more PR blast telling me that so-and-so is the next [insert some rock star name], I'm going to puke. Here's an

rend would read that and think they were. The folio is question: are actually a decent band, though. So how about something like, "Biting sonic riffs from Wilco, and thematic inspiration from the likes of Springsteen and Petty." Nah, nah, nah." A little more honest, much less hyperbolic and, not only that, you're speaking my interest. Of I've

[illegible]

SOUND*bites*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20



Red Square to Nectar to Metroamas to the 1/2 Lounge and probably a few other joints I'm forgetting but it's as merry a holiday here in sunny as you'll find. This year should be no exception, as Hughes decks the halls at Parrot's Acoustic Lounge in a very special holiday installment of the ever-popular Bangin' Thursday series this week. Expect appearances from LIA WHEE, JULIE MCWICKER, MARK RANDOL, MARK and JOE

SPENCER, MARIE CLARK, BARRE
FRANK, HALLAM ELLIS, LOWELL
THOMPSON, BRITT LANE, DEAN
FRANK J. and JUDY.

This next "tradition" is still new but promises to become a welcome annual addition to our collective yuletide soles! Last year at this time, monster guitarist — and fellow ginger — **IAN WATSON** put together an all-star band and paid tribute to **THE MONSIEURS** *Let It Be*. This year, he's getting the band back

together to honor, well, **THE BAND AND DUFFY**. This Thursday, aka Christmas Eve Eve, at Nectar's, Wagner, Thompson, a **RAVE**, **JOHN BARNES**, **RAY PACEKROWSKI**, **JAMIE BLOMHOFF** and **STUVE HADERS** join forces to cover the 1974 live collaboration between the Band and Dylan, *Before the Flood*.

Fixed Name of the Work.

CHRISTMAS The final piece of my treasure chest of holiday traditions takes place at Nectar's on Christmas night. It's a blues jam featuring Corbucci, guitarist **DAVE BLUES** and my dear old friend, blues harpist **BOB CRAM**. I go every year, and every year I come away more impressed with Doc's chops than I was the year before.

'Tis the season for holiday singles, apparently. The latest comes to us from **DAVID NEXUS** with **THE BLADES**. It's a rocker' little reworking of a 1981 release called "Christmas Eve," co-written with **MATT WALCHON** of **THE ROOMFLWERS**. The song will eventually appear on the band's forthcoming full length, but is available for download at thekidsonline.com.

Seven nights seem to be gaining in popularity at

aren't clats. From blues to biguine, Irish to old-time, jazz to jazz and even honky-tonk, if people play it, there's probably a session for it somewhere. Now we can add soul music to the list, as Radio Bean has recently unveiled a Thursday night soul session featuring jazz

And, last but not least, anyone who had **"JAMES MAYNOR in Stowers"** on their Christmas list must have been extra nice this year. JT will bring the fire and rain to the Aspen of the East on Friday, December 31, to help celebrate the grand opening of a brand-spankin' new venue, the Spruce Peak Performance Arts Center. ☺

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Cave Dogs



Listening In

And once again, this month features self-made prodigies as our guests, in which a diverse, if not diverse, range of artists reveal how they made their mark. CD players, iPods, mp3s, etc., etc., etc.

Host: Jeff Galloway
**Producers: Kevin
 O'Connell, Mark
 O'Connell, and
 Jeff Galloway**

**Guest Artists: Elton
 John, The Killers,
 John Mellencamp,
 Prince, Chris
 Brown**

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music

CLUB DATES

WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY



RED (7-17) WYLLON SPEED ROCK

It's a Tradition!

New class GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURNALS are once again headlining a three-night stand at the Higher Ground Ballroom, leading up to New Year's Eve next really, well, next anyone. Locally, it's as much an old hat "sign" as the ball dropping in New York City's Times Square. But the selection of opening acts for each show is often overlooked. The highlight this year: local trackrock rockers **WYLLON SPEED**, who cap off a busy 2013 with designs on an even bigger 2014. Take our advice, GPN fans. On Wednesday, December 26, get to the Ballroom early and catch yet another ascending Vermont rock band.

THURSDAY 12/26

northern

RED & GRACE Kelly Davis (vocals)
7:30 pm, 12:30 am

BECKING MOUNTAIN TAVERN 6/12 Rockers
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

regional

WYLLON SPEED Local trackrock
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURNALS Local
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURNALS Local
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

FRI. 24

Burlington area

BACKSTAGE PUB Karaoke with Steve, 9 pm, Free
10:30 pm, 12:30 am

CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
10:30 pm, 12:30 am

J.P. & PINE Live Karaoke with Steve (live) 10:30 pm, 12:30 am

CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
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CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
10:30 pm, 12:30 am

central

BECKING MOUNTAIN TAVERN 6/12 Rockers
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
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CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
10:30 pm, 12:30 am

champlain valley

CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
10:30 pm, 12:30 am

northern

BECKING MOUNTAIN TAVERN 6/12 Rockers
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

regional

WYLLON SPEED Local trackrock
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

SAT. 25

Burlington area

CLUB METROHOUSE Live Supply, Belmont (live) 10:30
10:30 pm, 12:30 am

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champlain valley

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10:30 pm, 12:30 am

northern

BECKING MOUNTAIN TAVERN 6/12 Rockers
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

regional

WYLLON SPEED Local trackrock
8:30 pm, 10:30 pm

SUN. 26

Burlington area

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10:30 pm, 12:30 am

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music

CLUB DATES

NOT AVAILABLE: ALL AGES UNLESS NOTED



THE 26 // THE MORE IT MOVES IT APROPOS (DOPI)

Movin' on Up In certain contexts, "funky" is a four-letter word. But Burlington's **THE MORE IT MOVES IT** are comforting even the most left-footed dancers with something classical of Afrobeat, reggae and pop. Their raucous danceable stomp has stirred up quite a local buzz in recent months. Maybe because the band puts the f-u-n in funky? Whatever the reason, **TMIM** wrap up a month-long residency at Nectar's this Saturday.

MON 27 @ 10:30

central

LANSDOWN STREET CAFE Open till 2 a.m., 7 p.m. Free.
Live! Indie/Pop/Rock. Hosts: Hector & Reginald (cover)
[cover] 9 p.m. Donations

northern

BLEAT HILLMAN & GIGGLE Adult/Class Group
[cover] 9 p.m. \$10-15

TUE.28

burlington area

MO LUNGE Open till 2 a.m., 7 p.m. Free.
Live! Indie/Pop/Rock. Hosts: Hector & Reginald (cover)
[cover] 9 p.m. Donations

northern

DEERHORN 7 p.m. to 2 a.m., 7 p.m. Free.
Live! Indie/Pop/Rock. Hosts: Hector & Reginald (cover)
[cover] 9 p.m. Donations

MONKEY HOUSE Open till 2 a.m., 7 p.m. Free.
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Live! Indie/Pop/Rock. Hosts: Hector & Reginald (cover)
[cover] 9 p.m. Donations

central

CHAMBER 8.3 Open till 2 a.m., 7 p.m. Free.
Live! Indie/Pop/Rock. Hosts: Hector & Reginald (cover)
[cover] 9 p.m. Donations

MONKEY HOUSE Open till 2 a.m., 7 p.m. Free.
Live! Indie/Pop/Rock. Hosts: Hector & Reginald (cover)
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[cover] 9 p.m. Donations

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Tiny Treasures

"Petite" and Philip Koch at Edgewater Gallery

Middlebury's spacious Edgewater Gallery has a stunning view of the Otter Creek Falls from its back window, and there's plenty of dramatic work on its walls, as well. The venue is celebrating its one-year anniversary with more than 100 small works in an exhibition aptly titled "Petite." The show is stylistically eclectic, but the caliber of the work is uniformly high.

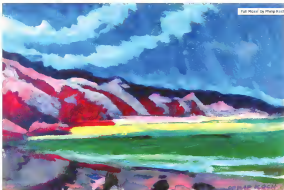
Boston artist Ellen Ball paints with heavy impasto and claret color harmonies. "Pink Intruder" is a 12-by-12-inch nondescript abstraction made with a broad range of reds, from a pink bordering on blue to a deep, red wine hue.

In the same vein, the enigmatic on-canvas "Green Army" presents a field of dark yellows with patches of cerise blue, red-orange and various greens stirring the atmosphere. Ball creates lush, bright images using rare colors of similar intensity and value.

"Delivering the Ship, Mexico" by Jim Roy of Newburgh, Mass., is a 14-by-16-inch painting that portrays a mountainous seascape with a tunnel running through it at the lower left of the scene. A truck beamed with bay lights looks tiny in relation to the scale of the mountain. In Roy's portrayal of mass, content is everything. Antagonizing the small truck with the broad mountainside makes the whole image even larger than it is.

Anna Sanders is a plein-air painter working in eastern Massachusetts. "Rust & Reflections I, II, III" is a group of three 5-by-8-inch canvases—essentially a triptych, even though the pieces are priced individually. Together they offer a panoramic view across a bog with a channel meandering toward the upper right. A crystal-blue sky is reflected in the placid water. There is marsh vegetation, the color of straw, and a stand of rust-barked trees at the horizon. Sanders' palette of just three main colors condenses the landscape into essential shapes and forms.

Ellen Welch Granger of Iroquoia, Miss., paints a lot of birds. Little song birds are a recurring theme on her web-



Full Moon by Philip Koch



Pink Intruder by Ellen Ball

site. In the Middlebury show, Granger's 12-by-12-inch "City Whispers" portrays five songbirds over a pale-lilac background. It's an elegant composition, with birds darting the curves like a little archipelago.

In addition to "Petite," the gallery is presenting an exhibition of 15 paintings by Maryland artist Philip Koch. The featured artist of the month, he's got

THE SHOW IS STYLISTICALLY ECLECTIC, BUT THE CALIBER OF THE WORK IS UNIFORMLY HIGH.

some small works, too. "Full Moon" is a 16-by-16-inch abstract landscape showing moonlight falling across a shoreline. Rills of lunar light hover at upper left, indicating a moon just beyond the horizon of the piece. That technique is used again in "The Red Whimper." The 30-by-16-inch oil has an unusual crimson sky, and its light source hangs directly above a stand of pines centered in the composition. By making light seem to emanate from just beyond the perimeter of his picture, Koch heightens its expressive mood.

The artist cites Edward Hopper as an influence, but Koch's work is more apolitical. Canadian painter Lawrence & Florie, of the Group of Seven, seems like a

closer match. The ferment of Koch's 7-by-10-inch oil on panel "Northern Sky" is a golden yellow, with strands of gray cirrus cloud wafting over a rocky peninsula. These cloud forms are reflected peacefully in the water.

The 16-by-20-inch "Deep Forest Poof" has more traditional natural colors of a birch forest in the foreground, but its background is nearly black. Whites and gray tree trunks hold the composition together like the bones of a skeleton.

Edgewater is a dynamic gallery that will most likely continue to show excellent works in its second year. It's a well-curated space, and the visual competition of a waterfront nearby shouldn't be too difficult to overcome.

MARC AMOGEY

F Photo courtesy Koch at Edgewater Gallery; Middlebury through November 24

ONGoing

Burlington area

ARNDIS VALLÉE Colorful paintings from abstract to realistic of various landscapes. Through January 30 at The Pocket Cafe in Coast Junction. Info 508-261-5363

ANSEL JACOBI An intense kind of landscape paintings depicts a moody and surrealized landscape photographs as canvas. Through December 28 at Village House & Coffee in Shelburne. Info 959-3900

ART 101 SHOW ROOM: SUZUKI SUZUKI By interest and photography on two levels. Through December 30 at Burlington House. Info 508-533-5333

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS Landscapes and portraits by Corbie Hagen-Guthrie. Shows a lot in one and female artist. Also painting by Tricia Bussell. Through December 30 at Landon Jones. Info 959-6052

EMILY S. BURCK Art from nature: paintings of all mammals, animals and children. Info 959-6052. Recent artist. Plus book catalog by the artist's students. Sept 9-10, featuring work of the children's book artist and artist's book artist Marylin H. Davis. Info 959-6052. A Project Bookstore. Through January 30 at New Music Cafe in Burlington. Info 508-9055

ELABE GORDON Bold Modern "painted" regenerative art and patterns by the Burlington artist. Through January 15 at One Room Art Center. Info 955-9048

DECEMBER GALLERY SHOW Award-winning paintings photographs and sculpture, visually rich. Info 959-6052. Artistic and abstract paintings and wood sculpture by Steve Campbell. Info 959-6052. Award-winning artist. Through December 31 at Harbor Station in Burlington. Info 959-7462

Chris Romano

A rainbow can through dark clouds over a white church. Fog rises softly on a valley floor. A pair of black dogs bounds through snow-covered meadow. For the last 30 years, Stone artist Romano has been there, at just the right moment, to capture these images. The result? Postcard-perfect photographs of the Vermont landscape. In "Transitions" at Black Cap Coffee's Townsend Gallery in Stone, he documents the changing of seasons, from fall to winter, in the Green Mountains. His imagery of fiery leaves, bright red barns and pristine snow reminds us why we suffer through the bitter cold to live here. The show is on view through December 31. Pictured, "Mistfield From Waterbury Center."

CALL TO ARTISTS

CALLING ALL SHOW SCAPERS The Burlington Winter Festival is seeking applications for the 2011 Vermont Best Sculpture Competition. The winning team will represent Vermont at the national competition in Lake Geneva, Illinois, in 2012. Starts February 3 with opening on February 5 during the Burlington Winter Festival. Exhibits in the public spaces and connects artists. Starts January 31. Any interested artists should email to: info@vtsculpture.com for an application.

HUMAN ATTRACT Calling for submissions to a joint photography exhibit at the Vermont Photo Space Gallery. Starts January 31. Info: info@vtsculpture.com

PAINTING Photography exhibit at the Vermont Photo Space Gallery. Starts January 31. Info: info@vtsculpture.com

TALKS & EVENTS

AN EVENING OF HOLIDAY CARDS Local artists showcasing the spirit of the season. Also a performance at 7:30 p.m. of local and regional Christmas songs by the South County Chorus and the Vermont Artistic Series. Starts December 28 at 8:30 p.m. at the Vermont Photo Space Gallery. Info: info@vtsculpture.com

WINTERGALLERY The first annual exhibition will feature works by 10 artists who have shown at the SOFA art fair during throughout the year. Curated by the Burlington Arts and Science Association. Through January 31 at SOFA Gallery in Burlington. Info 959-5332

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JOHN KENNETH WATSON "New and Old" at the Vermont Photo Space Gallery. Starts January 31. Info: info@vtsculpture.com

JULIE GORDON "New and Old" at the Vermont Photo Space Gallery. Starts January 31. Info: info@vtsculpture.com

JON GORDON "New and Old" at the Vermont Photo Space Gallery. Starts January 31. Info: info@vtsculpture.com

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BURLINGTON AREA ART GALLERIES & POI

ORIGINALS MARKET Original paintings and prints of scenic, nature, abstract and animal. Through December 28 at Garden & Dealers in Burlington info: 508-365-1955

LOUNGE Art by Bill Evans presents paintings of things by the Vermont artist. Through December 28 at Shovel Theater in South Burlington info: 509-1161

MADE ART GALLERY The group whose art hangs at P.A.C. in Burlington includes paintings depicting a few more artists: Joyce Goss, John Steiner, One Sky One Heart, Gary Monahan, Jeffrey DePaul, Gary DePaul and George Zwick. Regularly scheduled, all size and all media: prints, paintings, mixed media and light and shadow installations. Curated by the local art and design association. Through February 28 at P.A.C. Studio in Burlington info: 508-5322

MACTOWN WORKSHOP Paintings by Joe Bennett and art. Through December 31 at Red Square in Burlington info: 373-3428

MOON LAKE Portland Area art and abstract paintings exploring the landscape of the body of water. Through January 2 at 225 College Street in Burlington info: 508-365-1100

NO. BURLINGTON Paintings and prints. Local artists and designers. Through January 12 at Music Station in Burlington info: 258-2887

NO. CHURCH Local art and prints by the Vermont artist. Through January 2 at ArtSpace 108 at The Mill in Burlington info: 504-2280

ROSE GALLERY In the main downtown part of town. Local artists and designers. Through January 12 at Rose Gallery in Burlington info: 508-365-1100

SANCTUARY Why Did You Just Take a Photo of Me? A series of paintings and prints exploring the loss of a person in a moment. Through January 2 at 225 College Street in Burlington info: 508-365-1100

STATIONERY Paintings and prints by the Vermont artist. Through January 2 at Stationery in Burlington info: 508-365-1100

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art



Carolyn Walton The internationally known artist left Vermont for the Maine coast five years ago, but her oil paintings suggest that Vermont is still her impression. In her work, currently in a group show at Shelburne's Lucien-Jones Gallery called "Celebrate the Holidays," viewers will recognize Walton's interpretations of the Shelburne Museum Round Barn, a palm lake Champlain and a snowy Charlotte farm. The award-winning Walton will be included in an upcoming book called 100 Artists of New England. The Lucien-Jones show, which also features paintings by Gail Kowalski, Athena Schmitt and Brenda Myrick, along with jewelry by Tinske Russell, runs through December 30. Patrons: "Bare in the Kingdom."

CENTRAL VT SHOWS & Fairs

WARR CHERRY "Building Capital," digital photographs that have been reproduced and printed to create optical illusions, in a technique called topography. Through January 31 at The Gallery Project in Montpelier. Info: 445-5102

WINTERBURNED SHIRAZI "Notes to Home," Central Vermont Crafted Cloth Dolls. Median Hotel. Carla Knudsen, Rosemarie O'Neill, David Plutner, Bob Stirling, Ryan Voth and Jonathan Weisley. Through March 20 at 100 West 100 St. in White River Junction. Info: 802-535-0370

RAY BROOK New paintings inspired by a recent trip to Italy. Through December 31 at The Shelburne Museum. Info: 802-248-6600

VERMONT FINEST SOCIETY'S JAMES SCHMITZ An annual show of artists' work, paintings and abstract images by members of the organization. Through January 20 at Greenway's Office Gallery in Montpelier. Info: 802-560-7

JOE BARRACLOUGH "NYC Every Day" Images of life in New York City through a blue of modern in the Brooklyn photographer's hands. Through January 31 at the Square in Burlington. Info: 802-248-6600

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY

CAROLYN WALTON "Moving Out" photographs of a woman's life in Vermont. Through January 31 at the Shelburne Museum. Info: 802-248-6600

CAROLYN WALTON Large scale landscape oil paintings in the Vermont art and photography show by the Vermont artist. Through January 31 at the Shelburne Museum. Info: 802-248-6600

EMILY BETHUNE A collection of new jewelry designs in glass and silver. Through January 31 at the Shelburne Museum. Info: 802-248-6600

movies

True Grit ★★☆☆

I guess without saying that Joel and Ethan Coen's update of the 1969 western that earned John Wayne his tally, they Coen's represents a departure in approach, interpretation and tone. On the surface, Charles Fortin's 1961 novel would seem ripe for the brothers' patented pluck 'n' spit. Yet while they make a movie more suited to our time, the Coens honor's quite made one likely to offend it. Conspicuously, the book's dark humor continues to elide in attempts at screen adaptation.

The film has its share of nice touches: yet it fails to stick with the brothers' no-nonsense stuff. Not that the Coens haven't established an A-tier on all fronts. Cinematographer Roger Deakins is a high point of his profession and, after an essay introduction, can probably pretty much rival the formalist cinematographer. He does achieve work here. *True Grit* is something to see, even if not every minute is worth watching.

Likewise, Coen's narrative style is a thing of transcendence, evocative beauty. The heavily stylized dialogue, as adapted by the brothers' producers, brings out formality in the 1970s. The construction evidently had yet to be invented. But again, it mysteriously

drops all but trace elements of the author's way.

Then there's the cast, several members of which have appeared in previous Coen productions. The performances they give don't seem around pole beside their past work.

Jeff Bridges' iconic Thelma, for example, is in no danger of being eclipsed by his capable but familiar Reiner Gophers. The actor plays the insouciant loner and drunken cowboy in an older, grumpier version of the country singer and drinker, dead Thelma, but Coen's younger role in last year's *Coen About* (Newman Under Sheriff) more than holds her own as Matilda than the Arkansas 19-year-old who hires Gophers to bring her father's murderer to justice.

Accompanying the past on these previous risk through Coen's journey as a Texas Ranger second LeFlore, played by Matt Damon. The actor's game and does his friend out to embody the character the Coens want as a foil to Gophers. The problem is they seem to have been unable to make up their minds about just what sort of character that in One more. Labeled as a young in the young girl in the story and overly speaking of "wandering's line" "The next, here's the



Do Right at the hands, during the process of his crime and speaking the Ranger motto like a well-known boy.

Then, however, his high points, including a run in with cohorts of their quarry and a short cut with a woman's gang (Barry Pepper plays its leader and, I think, looks like he's had plastic surgery to turn him into Harry Dean Stanton). It's a good look for him. These scenes are Wild West fun, but hardly classic movie moments.

There's the thing about *True Grit* Coen: it's with a Coen masterpiece like *The Untouchables* for GM Men and you'll see what I mean. There's more suspense, mystery and plot in the scenes where James Earle Ray plays a coin and orders the prison owner to "kill it" than in the entire picture. Great case clearly seen into its making. Great case

completely proved beyond its makers' grasp. I am extremely pleased to search to watch Josh Brolin at work, but he, too, has been far from the Coen's corner, the *True Grit* — the killer whose entrance comes some 90 pages into the picture — is a generic frontier miscreant so thoroughly conceived that the viewer is unlikely to feel much invested in the character's fate. The film's final moments border on the satirical note.

Goodbye, bad guys — obviously, they're all mostly destined in the sprawling volume of the brothers' *Monsters*. It required a degree of artistic skill to remake a classic as beloved as *True Grit* and the Coens give it a hell of a shot. In this case, unfortunately, there are some flaws.

RICK KISIAK

REVIEWS

Black Swan ★★★★★

Maybe for the horror genre developed young when someone made the miracle of prognoze as a classical kind of cinema from classic ballet. From the girls world of Giselle to the living puppets of *Persepolis*, each tale offered something creepier than the last. I was especially riveted by the dance of *Odette in Swan Lake*, an enigmatic even murder who loses her last chance to be human when her prince dances off with her evil double. The final picture showed the horror-movie-making, making writers doing our last picture.

I never saw a production of *Swan Lake* that looked as like that stage, or like *Thelma's* score for the final scene. Until now.

Of course, *Thelma* Acropolis's *Black Swan* isn't a *Swan Lake*, though it does feature dancing from stars Natalie Portman and Mila Kunis (and their producers) between doubles and revealing, hard times comes by *Black Swan*. It's a ballet horror movie.

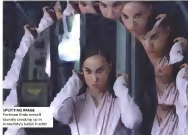
Think the nightmare ballet from *The Red Shoes* extended to feature length, or *Thelma* Acropolis's *Black Swan* with more dancing. I would hesitate to recommend *Black Swan* to any dance fan who can't stand the work of the two chosen *Black Swan*, *Black Swan* and

Black Swan. But the only monster in it is the spirit that it leaves every kind and so many other artists pursue the pursuit of perfection.

Portman plays *Black Swan*, a member of a New York company who's never been able to get the leading role in the end her room (Brolin Herschel), a former dancer, desperately want for her "I want to be perfect." Who tells the company's director (Vincent Cassel), when he sees her he doesn't think she's capable of embodying both *Odette* and her evil double, the *Black Swan*.

His reply was "You're like 'Perfection' not just about control. It's also about letting go." When *Black Swan* is a potential rival to *Black Swan* who does "let go" (Mila Kunis), her transformation begins. But *Black Swan* her only competitor (and possible rival) now. Though *Black Swan* seems like a shattered circle, she spends her life in terror (spine) *Black Swan* let's us see everyone else — in her mothering mother, in the inhuman director, in a jealous young prince ballerina — maybe even in herself.

As he did in *The Wrestler*, *Acropolis* speaks a lot of time following his progress, making the camera practically on Portman's shoulder (Oh wonder *Black Swan* in person). But when the actress does so, she shows a depth and richness of emotion we haven't seen



from her before. And when she finally does, in the role, the result is a unforgettable scene in which at once, music, movement, art direction and performance come to produce something like a real dance.

Black Swan directors say it's a conclusion as well as a thriller. I agree. *Black Swan* is the self-titled, actually repeated that has been with it since before *Black*

Black Swan was composed, they probably inspired some of those death obsessed ballets. But, by taking the artist's death pursuit seriously and giving us a series of glimpses of the transcendence she seeks, *Acropolis* gives Portman her most convincing role (the way anyone can of her only convincing role). She lets the film be a lot of art.

MARGOT HARRISON

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Disc: www.westwood.com
Anti-bias education

BIG PICTURE THEATER

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Our recycling bin
blew the coop?

We have it —
it's on our porch!

Speaking of porches, do you know
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50 Vermont towns now?

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Curses, Follies Again

Federal authorities and two masked gunmen greeted the waters of a New York City pizzeria arriving home after closing the store and ordered one of the women to hand over a bag they believed held the day's earnings. Instead, Drug Enforcement Administration agent Kristina Oswald reported, it "contained pizza goods." Even so, the pizzeria owner resisted handing over the bag. Taking that reaction as proof the bag had value, the robbers shot the owner twice in the legs and fled with the haul. Suspect Salvatore LaRocca, 25, later turned himself in. (New York's Daily Times)

Nathan Alan Brumaglio, 23, walked into a police station in Eugene, Ore., and asked to make a call. The desk officer suggested a Brumaglio from current-robbery video of a bank robbery the day before and notified detectives. "I just assume that he didn't believe we'd recognize him," Detective Ralph Barba said after Brumaglio's arrest. (Eugene's Register-Guard)

Onward, Christian Soldiers

The First Baptist Church of Dallas launched a holiday-season website for people to tattle on businesses that aren't celebrating Christmas with appropriate store displays, advertising and greetings to customers, such as using "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas." "Too many businesses have bowed down to political correctness," insisted the church's pastor, the Rev. Robert A. Fries, who previously made national news by preaching a sermon titled "Why Gay Is Not OK" and branding Islam as an evil religion. "We want this as a fun campaign." (Dallas Morning News)

When Gratification Can't Wait

Even though Alabama is the only state that still bans sex toys, Sherril Williams opened a new location for Pleasures, her "one-stop pleasure shop" in Huntsville, Ala. Williams claims to be the first in the nation with three sex toy drive-thrus. Customers, teens, lubricants and vibrators are delivered through the drive-through drawers in brown paper bags.

Williams attracted media attention by challenging the sex toy ban. The Alabama Supreme Court upheld it, but she has managed to circumvent it because state law does permit the sale of items designed for the "stimulation of human genital organs" if they're for "a bona fide medical, scientific, educational, legalistic, judicial or law enforcement purpose." Pleasures requires customers to fill out a medical questionnaire describing the health-related reasons for their purchase. (Huntsville Times)

Second-Amendment Follies

While admitting a gun has costed him green lawn, Burnside County, Idaho, Sheriff Loren Nielsen tried to lower the hammer, but his thumb slipped. The gun fired, wounding Nielsen in the hand. "My pride is injured," he said after being treated in the emergency room, "but my hand is fine." (Idaho Falls' KIFI-TV)

Police in Anaheim, Calif., reported a scene unfolding on a dead watchdog's movie tried to scratch his nose with the barrel end of a 100 gun, not realizing the safety wasn't engaged, and accidentally shot himself in the face. (Northampton's Daily Hampshire Gazette)

Slow-Speed Chases

When Ricky New, 45, used a stick to rub a woman's nose in Atlanta, A.C., he received an undisclosed amount of money and fled the scene on his getaway vehicle, a Confederate riding lawn mower, sheriff's Capt. Troy Elwell stated, noting that deputies easily caught up to New. (Atlanta Journal)

Authorities charged Billie Jo Stevenson, 34, and Jonathan Lee Mosier, 34, with stealing a motorized shopping cart from a Wal-Mart store in Huntington, W.V., after a state trooper found it abandoned — blocking a highway lane. A sheriff's deputy who responded observed the suspects walk from a strip club to the cart, then drive it home, with Mosier walking beside the cart while Stevenson drove. (Huntington's Herald-Examiner)

On a Roll

When Saunders, 60, pleaded guilty to dropping toilet paper from a small plane over athletic fields at a middle school in Worcester, N.J. After withdrawal on the ground spotted the plane, they alerted authorities, prompting a large law enforcement presence. When apprehended, Saunders explained he'd been practicing for a summer day he planned to do at a high school football field. He got probation and had to write a letter of apology to the mayor. (Woodland Park's Record)

Laws presented instead making their own toilet paper, both to save having to buy it and to create jobs for inmates. Two prisoners are currently testing a single ply tissue made at a Missouri prison. Although Al Renteria, the associate warden at the prison in Ansonia, Texas, and the test paper isn't fully the state wanted it's good enough. State lawmakers must approve the switch to in-house production, which Roger Reynolds, director of Iowa Prison Industries, pointed out would save about \$100,000 and employ 50 inmates. (Des Moines Register)

Women VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Department of Ob/Gyn, Ira Bernstein MD

WE ARE RECRUITING WOMEN WHO:

- Are interested in becoming pregnant for the first time OR
- Have a history of high blood pressure and are interested in becoming pregnant OR
- Have Type I diabetes and are interested in becoming pregnant OR
- Have a history of pre-eclampsia and are interested in becoming pregnant again.

This study will examine risk factors for pre-eclampsia, a disease of pregnancy

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE IF YOU:

- Are 18-40 years of age
- Have regular menstrual cycles
- Are not using hormonal birth control
- Want to become pregnant

Compensation is provided, between \$35 and \$375.

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COMICS+puzzles

MORE PUZZLES!
CROSSWORD PUZZLE
(PAGE 11 CLASSIFIED)

MORE COMICS!
THE NEWCOMES (PAGE 11)
THE MEAT (PAGE 11)

MORE FUN!
NEWS QUIZ (PAGE 11)
FREE WILL ASTROLOGER (PAGE 11)



⊗ CALCOKU BY JOSH REYNOLDS

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★

For the upcoming numbers it is only once in each row and column. The numbers in the empty squares must contain the same number as the number in the square above it. The numbers in the empty squares must contain the same number as the number in the square to the left of it. The numbers in the empty squares must contain the same number as the number in the square to the right of it. The numbers in the empty squares must contain the same number as the number in the square below it.

⊗ SUDOKU BY JOSH REYNOLDS

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row, column, and 3x3 square contains each of the numbers from 1 to 9. The numbers cannot be repeated in a row or column.

★ = MODERATE ★★ = CHALLENGING ★★★ = HARD BOY — FIND ANSWERS & CROSSWORD IN THE CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

OGG'S WORLD

Mr. Ogg



Happy Holidays from Ogg's World

NO EXIT

© Andy Singer

HOLIDAY TRAVEL SONG

ON THE THIRD HOUR OF FLYING,
MY AIRLINE GAVE TO ME:
THREE SCREAMING INFANTS,
TWO BAGS OF PERMITS, AND
A DRINK THAT WAS COMPLIMENTARY



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SLEEP DEATH



CHRISTMAS COOKIE PARTY



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Seven Days supported these local community organizations and initiatives through event sponsorship and subsidized advertising in 2010.

This year, we're challenging our readers and advertisers to dig deep and give to local causes that keep Vermont healthy, connected and entertained.

Short on cash? Volunteering your time and talents also counts. Already giving? Spread the love and recruit a friend to match your generosity.

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Bays & Oaks Club
Burlington Book Festival
Burlington City Arts
Burlington Discover Jazz Festival
Burlington Farmers Market
Burlee Snowboards (Dutton City Sessions)
Cancer Patient Support Programs
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging
The Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)
Planning Museum
FlynnSpace
Good News Garage
Green Mountain Care
Green Mountain Film Festival
Haward Center
Interval Center
KidSafe Collaborative
Lake Champlain Community Sailing Center
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
Laura Kilo Winterbottom Memorial Fund
Mealy Connections
Mobius the Monitoring Movement
Outright Vermont
Pride Vermont
Rutland Community Center
United Way of Chittenden County
Upper Valley Arts
Vermont Arts Council
Vermont Brewers Festival
Vermont Business & Industry Expo
Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger (Hanger Free Vermont)
Vermont Foodbank
Vermont Fresh Network
Vermont Historical Society
Vermont International Film Festival
Weg to Go! (commuter challenge)
Warren Miller Entertainment
Women's Small Business Program

“

Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are.
When you realize there is nothing lacking,
the whole world belongs to you.

”

Lao Tzu

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